



THE TRAIL
of the
GO-HAWKS

EMILIE BLACKMORE STAPP



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THE TRAIL OF

THE GO-HAWKS





The mighty tribe of Go-Hawks sat in solemn
conclave out behind the new barn.

THE
Trail of the Go-Hawks

BY
EMILIE BLACKMORE STAPP
Author of "Bread and 'Lasses"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRIET MACY



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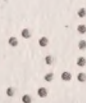
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TO THE MEMORY OF MY

Mother

WHOSE HEART WAS FULL OF LOVE FOR YOUTH

IS THIS STORY DEDICATED

AND TO ALL THOSE MOTHERS

WHO NEVER FOR AN INSTANT DOUBT THAT

A GOOD TO-MORROW WILL DAWN

FOR THEIR BAD LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS

OF TO-DAY

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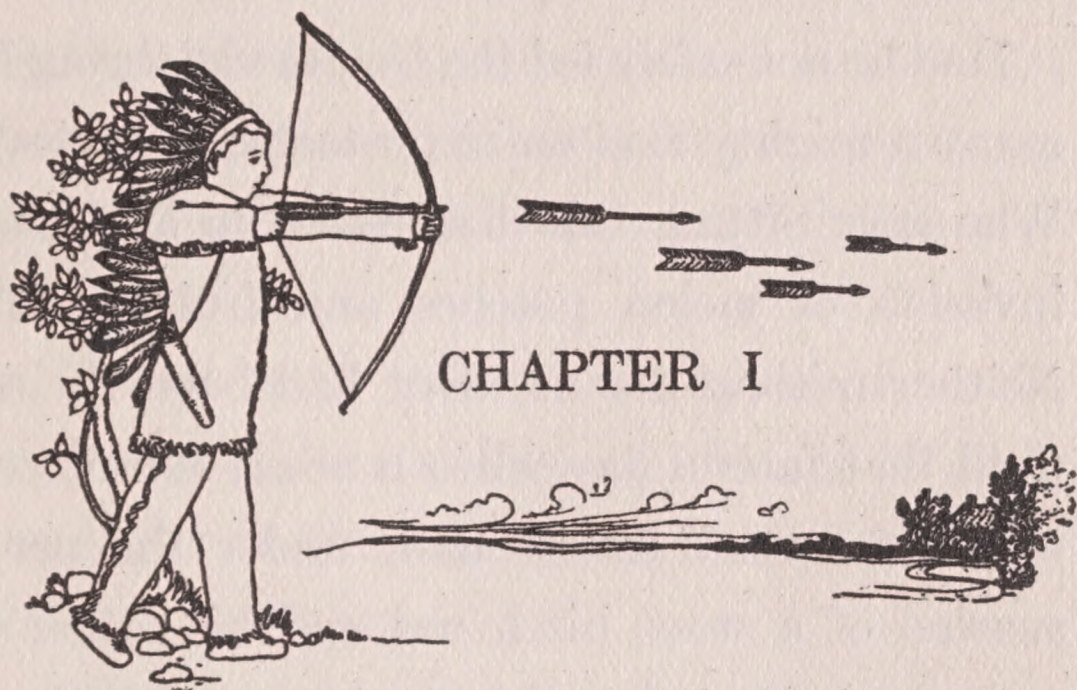
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The Trail of the Go-Hawks



CHAPTER I

THE INITIATION

THE mighty tribe of Go-Hawks sat in solemn conclave out behind the new barn in Broken Arrow Town. It was a council of war and the chief of the tribe, Sitting Bull, had thrown into his speech the accumulated knowledge of his long and eventful life. He was ten years old and since the majority of his warriors were but eight, or at most nine,

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he felt he might properly speak with the authority born of experience.

Had he not safely led the Go-Hawks through many a mighty raid on unprotected pantries? Who save Sitting Bull had dared to lead the invasion of melon patches and fruit trees? Neither mishap nor accident had been theirs until that fateful day when a newly admitted member turned traitor and, under the persuasion of a stout birch rod and his father's accusing eye, confessed between wails all that he knew of the Go-Hawks. What mattered that his downfall with the tribe was complete, that he was ignominiously expelled and snubbed by them when they met him on the street? What did it avail that these mighty warriors had slain ten geese in their famous battle of Goose Creek? They, too, had stern and law-abiding parents, with strict notions of duty and likewise insensible to the romance

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of Indian raids on their neighbors' property. Was it then strange that these warriors, whose bodies still tingled with the memory of that period of stress, felt a pardonable hesitancy when the question arose of admitting new members?

"There ain't no gittin' 'round it those Trevellyn kids are daisies," thoughtfully remarked a freckle-nosed lad, whose eyes were inclined to squint.

"Yep, an' yer know, fellers, they showed us how t' git into Aunt Sallie's fruit closet an' Jiminy Christmas! those pickled peaches taste like some more t' me," added another.

"I can plainly see that th' sentiment of th' tribe is t' 'nitiate th' Trevellyn kids to-night. I'm glad you feel this way 'cause I'm sure they'll be worthy editions t' our tribe, so I'd like t' suggest," said Sitting Bull loftily, "that some of you kids make a movement t'

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let in th' Trevellyn kids to-night." The day before he had attended a club meeting with his mother, and now struggled to put this experience to practical use.

An embarrassing silence followed, for the young Go-Hawks understood the science of no "movement" save that of their restless bodies. The chief then came, as a good chief should, to their rescue. "Then I'll make that movement this time my own self, but you must learn how. I movement that we take in th' kids an' if you've any just cause or thing against 'em, holler it now or else shut up thereafter." The speaker was silent for a minute and then concluded impressively. "Ev'ry Indian who'd like t' see this movement move, turn a hand-spring an' take his seat without a speck of noise."

One by one the Go-Hawks rose and turned a handspring, all save Rain-in-the-Face, who

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sat rigidly in his place on a bunch of straw, thoughtfully wiggling his brown toes.

"Why didn't you holler if you've got a kick comin'?" interrogated Sitting Bull scornfully.

"'Tain't much," responded the boy slowly, "only I hate t' play with girls with yeller curls a-danglin'. If they'd cut 'em off I'd just as soon they'd be Indians."

"If that's all your kick bring your mother's scissors an' to-night you can remove th' objectionous hair," said Sitting Bull scornfully.

"They mightn't lemme me cut 'em off," demurred Rain-in-the-Face.

"Let you? I should say they'd let you for I tell you those kids are game. Do you still kick?"

"Not me," answered Rain-in-the-Face as he soberly turned a hand-spring.

"The meetin' is now sojourned," announced

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Sitting Bull a little later. "Be here at seven. Wear your war paint an' feathers. Bring 'long th' pipe o' peace, an' Spotted Wolf, if you can get any more feathers out o' your rooster's tail, bring 'em, for th' new Indians' ll need 'em. Now hike, one by one, an' not a word t' anybody on pain of death," warned the chief. "I'll bring th' kids myself."

* * * * *

"Mother," said the chief sweetly a half hour later, "it's awful lonesome-like when you an' father go t' a dinner party. Would you care if I asked Miss Sallie t' let th' girls come over? I can't get into trouble with just girls. I 'most forgot t' tell you, mother, that I thought you were th' prettiest lady at th' club yesterday. May I go sometime again? It's so kind o' prespiring-like, you know."

"You mean, 'inspiring,' dear," answered

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Mrs. Carroll. "I presume it will be all right about to-night, but promise to be careful. So you were not ashamed of your mother at the club?"

The boy laughed gleefully. "Well, I should say not," he answered, "an' say, mother, can't we have pickled peaches? an' some chocolate cake'd taste good, too."

The mother smiled and drew the young inquisitor close in her arms. "You are a regular little coax, Jack, but you are mine and I would not lose you for the world. Tell Mary that I said to have pickled peaches, chocolate cake—and the twins, oh, yes, do not forget the twins. You had better run along, dear, for it is growing late."

Jack needed no second dismissal and running as fast as his sturdy brown legs could carry him, stood a few minutes later, cap in hand, in the Trevellyn library.

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"Aunt Sallie, mother sends her love an' says t' tell you that she'd be th' gladdest she's been for a long time if you could spare Prudence an' Patience to tea this evenin'. She trusts you'll not deny her th' privilege. We're goin' t' have chocolate cake."

Jack felt that he had made a speech worthy of his mother's son and complacently awaited a reply. He loved to make speeches and had often listened to his mother as she practiced in preparation for the club meetings, thus acquiring confidence in his own oratorical powers.

Miss Sallie was fond of Jack, as indeed seemed every one who came in contact with him, and when he delivered one of his speeches she enjoyed answering him in the same vein.

"This is a great honor I am sure, Jack, and will be much appreciated by the little girls. Please present my compliments and thanks to your mother. May I ask you to walk

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home with the girls at eight? If you will wait until I brush their hair they may return with you now."

"I'll 'scort them home myself, Aunt Sallie, so you need not worry 'bout that," answered the boy.

The three children might have been seen an hour later holding a solemn conference underneath a cherry tree. The twins' eyes were riveted on Jack and were round from excitement.

"Now listen to me, girls," that worthy was saying with great dignity, "this is th' turnin'-over point in your ignorant lives. You're t' be 'nitiated into th' great tribe of Go-Hawks an' thence thereafter you'll be our squaws an' follow us on th' war path an' only use your own names when in th' land of pale faces. You'll share our plunder, you'll be protected by fourteen braves an'

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your names 'll be carved in blood on birch bark. If you die in battle your bodies 'll be put in an Indian tree grave. Now," concluded the speaker solemnly, his brown eyes large and earnest, "to-night you must be brave whatever's done, 'cause it's a noble cause an' worthy of a patriot. Will you swear t' me that you'll not holler, no matter what's done?"

An impressive silence followed. It was plain the twins were bowed down with responsibility and well-nigh speechless at the proffered honor.

"I s'pose you're really s'prised, girls, 'cause as a rule lodge's don't let in girls, but I've told our Indians that you were most trusting an' would be worthy editions, too, an' I do want you t' be game when you're 'nitiated."

"What's 'nitiated, Jack?"

"Oh, that's what's done t' a man when

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he goes into anything. Ev'rybody does something t' you so you'll never forget—an' then afterwards you'll have a chance t' get even when somebody else comes in."

"What 'll they do t' us, Jack?" asked a timid voice.

"Yes, what 'll they do?" repeated the other.

"I don't just recollect for sure, but th' point is never t' let on you care even if you do, awfully—" finished Jack a little doubtfully as he glanced at the curls he secretly admired.

"We can let each other know if we care, can't we?" wistfully inquired one of the prospective squaws of the invincible tribe of Go-Hawks.

"Oh, yes, I s'pose that 'd do no harm. Now, if you'll just make yourselves at home, eat all th' cherries you can hold an' scuse me

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I'll get on my uniform an' we'll go t' Pawnee Dirt Lodge."

It did not take the chief long to make his preparations, namely, to remove his jacket, hang a blanket and a bow and arrow over his shoulders, put a daub of red paint on either cheek and feathers about his head. When he appeared he seemed most resplendent to his guests.

"You're just grand, Jack," announced one little maid, while the other's admiring eyes echoed the sentiment.

The chief scorned to take other notice of the compliment than to walk with more dignity as he preceded his future subjects.

"Be seated, ladies, on those old stumps," Sitting Bull directed, as the trio rounded the barn named by the youngsters "Pawnee Dirt Lodge." "Little Smoke, light th' pipe

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o' peace," he instructed a boy of African blood, who needed no other paint than the swarthy brown given by birth. "Each man take one puff an' get in order. Before we 'tend t' th' most important bus'ness I'll ask the committee on Eats t' report."

"Th' best we could do," piped a boyish treble, "was two pies, a can o' jam, some cold ham, six biscuits, a box o' raisins an' a cake o' chocolate."

"I call that pretty good," complimented Sitting Bull, "an' we sure 'll feast to-morrow. Is there a movement t' accept this report on Eats?" he then asked, recalling his lesson of the previous afternoon.

"I make t' movement it," responded one apt pupil.

"Then it's lifted—no, carried, I mean, an' will th' committee put th' supplies in th' secret cave?" While his order was being

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obeyed the chief took an extra puff at the corn-cob pipe.

“You girls get in th’ middle of th’ ring an’ one of you Indians blind their eyes,” he commanded a few minutes later. “Young women, I must warn you that one squeak on your parts ’ll bar you forever more out of th’ tribe of Go-Hawks, ’cause we can’t have squeaky girls in this company of Indians.”

The little girls trembled and clutched each other as they were blindfolded. They whispered courageously that they would die before they would “squeak,” and then they thought fearfully of their new shoes,—what if they should squeak? They hoped for the best as they ran backwards, jumped sideways, turned handsprings, drank vinegar and repeated with due solemnity the sacred ritual that would bind them to the tribe forever.

Then said the chief, “Rain-in-the-Face,

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you alone was objectioning to these worthy young women, so to you now falls th' givin' of th' last dose. When thy right eye offends thee pluck it out so why not curls?"

"Yes, but mebbe Aunt Sallie 'll get mad," ventured the gloomy Rain-in-the-Face.

"Do your duty," replied the chief sternly.

The boy's timid heart almost failed him as he clipped the silky hair. Now he held it in his own hands it seemed very different.

"Divide th' scalps of th' pale faces among th' braves," instructed Sitting Bull, slipping into his own pocket a particular curl he had always admired. "Fellers, th' Trevellyn kids are in us an' of us. Give 'em three cheers an' I'll lick th' first Indian who don't look after 'em always. When we're in Broken Arrow Town or on th' war-path our squaws must also be called by Indian names. You must all remember that never on pain of death

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can you call each other by our Indian names when th' treachorous pale faces are near. Then you must call me 'Jack' even though I'm your chief, 'Sitting Bull.' This noble warrior who so bravely scalped our squaws is called by us 'Rain-in-the-Face.' Our enemies know him as 'Donald Brown.' You squaws'll soon learn all our Indian names but guard well th' secret. When in council we'll call Prue, 'Whispering Leaves' an' Pat, 'Running Water.'"

Fifteen minutes later three Go-Hawks wended their way to the Trevellyn home. They were a trifle silent. In the dim evening light first the hand of one child, then that of the other felt cautiously of her shorn hair.

"You girls aren't 'fraid t' go in 'lone, are you?" asked Jack, doubtfully, as they reached the gate. "An'—an' I'm sorry if you care 'bout your curls, but I couldn't have Donald

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always stewin', an' I wanted him t' see you was what I said, game—an' p'rhaps you'd better tell Aunt Sallie that 'twas an accident, that you was what I said an' your hair got all tangled up together an' that you couldn't get home till it was cut off—or no—just say you regret it more'n tongue-can-tell, but that misfortunes never come singly an' that you was both beheaded at once; but I wouldn't tell on Donald, anyhow."

The children lingered in silence by the gate. Jack felt it his duty to say something more and struggled to remember the words of the minister when he came to offer consolation the day his grandmother died. He believed they would now be appropriate if he could just recall them. "My dear friends," he began slowly, "may th' dear Lord restrain you in your loss an' th' hairs of th' heads are numbered, so prob'ly yours'll be

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much easier t' count now. Even if an English sparrow falls down He sees, so cheer up. I can't think of anything more t' say, but I'll come over in th' morning. Good-night!"

This last oratorical effort so sobered the chief that he did not whistle as he scampered home. Clinging fast to each other's hands the squaws slowly entered the house on tiptoe.

"Oh, if father is only insecting a bug," whispered one timidly.

"An' if Aunt Sallie has gone to bed with a sick headache," added the other as she softly followed her sister down the shadowy hall.





CONSEQUENCES.

PROFESSOR TREVELLYN sat in his study deeply engrossed in scientific research. As the clock struck ten the door opened and his sister entered. He was grateful in a vague sort of way for the peace and quiet of the evening; it was not always thus in the Trevellyn household. So satisfactory had been his work that he even smiled at the present interruption. "Did you have a pleasant time?" he asked as his sister seated herself.

"Very. However, I did not intend to re-

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main so late. Did you see the children when they returned? I just went up to their room and they were both asleep."

"The children! Oh, yes, it seems to me I did hear them an hour ago. They stole past my door so softly that I thought best not to call them, but rather to encourage them in their wish to go quietly to bed."

Miss Sallie laughed and then her face grew very tender as she noticed a rose in the glass on the study table. "Philip, I wish you had more leisure to devote to the little girls. Somehow, all day I have been thinking of Patience and how much better she could have guided these mischievous little ones than I."

Professor Trevellyn knew without words of what his sister was thinking as she glanced at the rose on his table, for he had often told her of the day he and his young wife had

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planted the rose-bush—the week before the twins came.

“The bush and the little one will grow together,” the wife had said. “I shall take such care of them both and how proud we shall be of them in years to come.” Her brown eyes had grown tender as she walked slowly through the garden, keeping step in that trim little way of hers with the longer strides of her husband. “I wonder what the years will bring to us,” she said gently.

Philip slipped his arm about her. “I would not worry, dear, for I am positive of one thing, and that is that we shall find them very sweet, the three of us together.”

“You really believe all will be well?” asked the young wife wistfully.

“Certainly, dear,” he had answered earnestly, and still to-night he recalled, how even as he had spoken those words with her face

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upturned to his, a sudden pang had entered his heart,—a nameless fear. “How could I bear to be separated from her?” he had asked himself. But he had lived on without her in the same house, in the very sight of all she had held dear as a bride; for when the two little girls were born the gentle mother-spirit made the supreme sacrifice, even life itself.

The rose-bush had lived and so had the twins. In both cases there had been the same loving care and attention. At her brother's urgent request Miss Sallie had come to take charge of his home, temporarily, she supposed. The years drifted by, and the rose-bush, thrifty and luxuriant, was laden with fragrant blossoms and the twins were nine years old.

Miss Sallie was a mother to the children, while the serious father saw but little of

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them. To him, the twins were much like two specimens purchased at a terrible sacrifice. When it became necessary to analyze and classify them he would do so, but he postponed the operation from year to year. The girls at a very early age became familiar with Aunt Sallie's weak points as a disciplinarian. They learned how to wheedle and coax her, to confuse and distract her and knew she would appeal to their father only in direst need.

"I'm not much 'fraid of Aunt Sallie," Patience had whispered that evening as they hastily prepared for bed. "Even when auntie gets maddest she talks so softly that I love to hear her."

"I'm not goin' to tell on Donald even if father sticks pins into us an' puts us on a card, like he does his bugs," answered Prudence, whose imagination was active.

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Then they heard Aunt Sallie coming and scrambled into bed, feigning sleep as they had done many times before. "Poor babies," she thought, as she stood looking at them. "I hope they remembered to say their prayers. I wish their mother had been spared to them." It was that yearning that sent her to her brother for a little talk.

* * * * *

"Dear me! I wonder if it is raining in the children's room," thought Miss Sallie, as the storm a few hours later rudely awakened her, and the wind blew a fine cold rain through her east window. With this thought she hastened out of bed and to the nursery, as they still called this little room. When she had lowered the window she slipped over to the bedside of the sleeping children. She found the quilt over their heads and attempted quietly to pull it down.



When her footsteps had died away the heads came quickly from under the bed clothes.

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"Oh, Aunt Sallie, please don't!" pleaded a small voice from somewhere in the depths of the bed clothes.

"My little girls are not afraid of the storm, are they?" she asked gently.

"Not zactly 'fraid, auntie, but we don't like t' see th' lightnin' an' our heads feel better down here."

"An' you know, auntie," chimed in the other, "how sometimes one feels she'd rather be under somethin'."

"Oh, it is all right with auntie, dears. I want you to be comfortable, that is all. Try now to sleep, my birdlings, and when you waken in the morning the sun will be shining. Sweet dreams!"

When her footsteps had died away the heads came quickly from under the bed clothes.

"Let's tell her in th' mornin' that we're much more comfortabler with our hair cut

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off an then mebbe she won't care," whispered Patience.

"An' we'll run away 'fore we'll ever, ever 'll tell on Donald, 'cause Jack said we mustn't," urged Prudence who adored the chief of the Go-Hawks. "I'm so sleepy," she continued, "I guess I'll go to sleep now an' trust our hair t' th' Lord, 'cause I heard father say th' Lord had always given him strength t' bear his troubles." With these words the little hands clasped each other tightly and the twins were soon fast asleep.

Professor Trevellyn had spent a restless night. The brief conversation with his sister had opened wide the flood-gate of memory, and the scent of the roses, his wife's beloved roses, had crept into his very soul. "Perhaps I have neglected the children," he thought as he dressed, "but it has always seemed to me that if I did not work and

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work so hard that I should forget everything but work, I could not bear the pain of living without her." He seldom saw the children until they breakfasted with him, but this morning he went to their room to waken them, his little girls and Patience's—dear Patience, the tones of whose sweet voice had never left him.

When he went to their bed-side the children were still asleep. As he glanced at them the pleased expression on his face changed to a look of amazement. They resembled two small lads, for the long curls were entirely missing. He took off his glasses, rubbed them carefully and looked again. He then walked soberly to his sister's room.

"Sallie, why did you cut off the children's hair? It was really the prettiest thing about them and it curled just like their mother's," he said in an aggrieved voice.

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"Cut off their hair!" she exclaimed in amazement as she joined him in the hall. "What do you mean? I certainly would never cut those pretty curls that were the pride of my life and I might say the torment," she concluded as she thought of the many struggles to remove the tangles.

"Do not say anything to them about it until after breakfast. Let us first hear their explanation," instructed the professor as he went to his study for a half hour's work.

Miss Sallie called to the children from the hall, not entering the room as was her custom. "Put on your sailor suits, girls, and try not to be late to breakfast," she said, as she started down the stairs.

The twins did not play and talk as much as usual while dressing, and when they entered the dining-room, their feet dragged woefully.

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"Are you not feeling well?" asked the father with an amused twinkle in his eyes.

"Not so very," replied Patience, "an' our heads sort of ache this morning." The children seemed to have lost their appetites, and soon announced they were through breakfast and would go out on the lawn.

"Go into the study, please, and wait there for me," directed the father quietly.

The little ones knew that their hour of reckoning had come. "I just wish't I was an old dead beetle," observed one during the dreadful ten minutes of waiting.

"Yes, 'cause if we were beetles father'd like us an' now he never will," mournfully answered the other.

And then father came and took a little girl on each knee. He looked at them thoughtfully in silence.

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"I shan't tell, so there!" said one before a word had been spoken.

"Tell what, dear?" he asked, although he knew so well what troubled their hearts. "Why, little girls!" and he put a hand on each head tenderly, "where is the curly hair that father used to call his gold?"

A portentous silence followed and the little brows puckered anxiously. "We don't know—it—it—well, it got stuck together—and father—you wouldn't want our heads all stuck together, would you?" concluded Patience in desperation, for, somehow, her father's eyes were hard to meet.

"No," he replied quietly without a shadow of a smile flitting over his face, "I would not."

"We knew you wouldn't an' so we caused it removed," was the triumphant reply.

"Did you cut it off?"

"No—"

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"Who did?"

Another long pause.

"Will you not tell father, please?"

"Father, we promised we'd never tell an' even if you stick pins into us like you do all your bugs we never, never 'll tell 'cause we promised." This was a rather long speech for Patience. Then something in her father's face touched her little heart and she added, "we're sorry if you care, but it'll grow on again an' please don't cry."

At that critical moment there sidled into the room the brave chief of the Go-Hawks. He was bare-footed and his cap was resolutely pulled down over his eyes. At his heels pattered Aunt Sallie, her cheeks pink with excitement.

"Professor Trevellyn, am I too late?" asked Jack anxiously as he took a determined stand by the small culprits.

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Professor Trevellyn looked at the lad gravely. "John, I am indeed surprised. Young men who promise to bring little girls home safely after nightfall usually refrain from cutting off their hair while doing so."

The lad's face flushed. In all his careless little life no one had called him a young man, and to have the professor do so made his ten years seem full of importance. He determined to protect the twins at any sacrifice of self.

"Professor Trevellyn, will you please send the ladies from the room and we'll fight it out like men," he suggested gravely.

"Certainly, John," was the response. "Sallie, please take the girls with you."

"But, but—f-a-t-h-e-r—" wailed Prudence, as she was being led from the room, "please don't punish Jack, 'cause he never did it."

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The father closed the door without comment and then turned sternly to the lad. "John, I want you to tell me truthfully who is to blame for this."

"I—well, Patience and Prudence are not. They never did it an' you would be proud of 'em if you'd have seen how brave they were 'bout it—an'—"

"And what, John?"

"I guess it 'd be better for me to take all th' blame," he answered slowly.

"Did you cut off their hair?"

"N—o, not exactly—but I—I—felt confidential it 'd have t' be cut t' save their reputations."

The professor coughed slightly as he turned his face away for an instant. "Will you not tell me, John, who did do it?"

The little chap threw his cap on the floor and then squared his shoulders saying slowly,

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“Professor Trevellyn, if you want t’ whip me you can do it, but I will not tell. I’m at th’ head of this organization an’ you couldn’t help but disrespect a chief who would go back on one of his very own Indians, would you?”

The man looked at the boy with a new light in his eyes. Jack’s fearlessness appealed to him. “John, be very sure always that you are right and then stick to it as you have to-day. You may go now,” he concluded, and turned abruptly to his desk.

As he went down the hall Jack saw Miss Sallie seated by the library window. He was really fond of her and smothered the desire to hurry away without discussing further the clipped hair of his playmates. Approaching her he said gravely, “I’m sorry ’bout their hair, Aunt Sallie. Nobody cut it off t’ be mean. Don’t you want t’ come

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over an' see my mother's roses? They're 'bout th' color of your cheeks I should say," he said shyly, "an' very pretty. I'd like to stay here longer now, but I guess I'd better hurry," he concluded hastily.

Miss Sallie laughed notwithstanding the vexation she felt and then said reproachfully, "Why were you so naughty, Jack? Think how long it will be until they have pretty curls again. I thought I could trust you, dear."

"Aunt Sallie, let's don't bother our heads over things that worry. It'll be lots better. Their hair 'll be so much easier to comb now an' I'm sure it'll be more—more—" Jack paused, searching for a word with which he might hope to end the discussion. "It'll be healthfuler, you know, an' accidents will happen—an' it's better to remember, no I mean to forget it all."

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With these words the chief of the Go-Hawks donned his battered cap and hurried away.





CHAPTER III.



PIGGY RUNT'S DISCOVERY.

AMONG the schoolmates of Patience and Prudence the delight in parties was almost an epidemic. Miss Sallie was inclined to encourage the twins to attend them all since it was in harmony with her old-fashioned ideas of propriety that they should play with girls rather than with boys who knew no better than to cut off their hair. Even a fortnight of good behavior on the part of the twins, a result of their subdued state of mind, could not begin to reconcile her to

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the loss of the pretty curls. As for the twins, their new gentleness and inactivity were not entirely due to remorse, but to an uncomfortable habit their father had acquired of laying his hand on the shorn hair and sighing audibly whenever they passed near him.

"I just wish 't father 'd scold," said Patience dolefully, one noon as she and her sister had kissed him good-bye and he had sighed even more regretfully than usual. "I know he liked our hair, but we ought to be brave in times of 'fliction. Course he cared—but—"

"But he don't know we're game squaws, does he?" interrupted Prudence earnestly. "Jack said all the Indians thought we were game not t' holler when Donald cut off our hair an' not t' tell on him afterwards. Sure, Father 'd be proud of us if he only knew that, wouldn't he?"



Soon the children were seated on the floor
with their dolls.

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"I s'pose so, but he says he misses our hair like ev'rything, an' I heard him tell auntie t' let us go to all th' girls' parties, 'cause—well, I don't 'member why—"

"We're t' take our dolls to-day to th' party, aren't we? Let's dress 'em." Soon the children were seated on the floor with their dolls and a pile of dolls' clothes near them.

"Did you know you're goin' to a party, darling?" asked Patience of her blue-eyed dolly. "Let mama dress you," she whispered. "You can wear your pretty blue dress. Oh! You little precious!" she later exclaimed in delight when the doll was dressed to her perfect satisfaction. "Is your child ready, Miss Trevellyn?" she asked her sister.

"Yes, thank you, but Susanna's not very well to-day an' I think she'd better stay at

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home," answered Prudence, imitating her elders, who had used a similar expression in regard to herself.

"I'm sure my daughter 'll be pleased to take care of your child an' see that she does not run herself all out of breath—children are so—so unsponsable, don't you think so?"

"Yes, they are," drawled the other little mother. "My child often has it." She had no idea what the word meant, but she wished her doll to have any fashionable ailment. "I don't know whether Susanna's well 'nough to go to th' party or not?"

"Oh, I'd let her go if I were you," urged Prudence.

Just then Aunt Sallie came to dress the girls. Are the dolls all ready?" she asked kindly. "How pretty they look," she continued, as each was held up for inspection.

At these words of praise the small mothers'

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faces dimpled with happiness and its after-glow still lingered as they started down the street to the party, wheeling their go-carts.

* * * * *

“Piggy” Runt had thrown himself down disconsolately behind the back terrace. He was decidedly out of sorts. Every warrior in the tribe of Go-Hawks, at least so it seemed to him, had gone fishing that afternoon, while he had to stay at home to run errands and pick pansies for a girl’s party.

Piggy’s younger sister was giving the party and he was invited. But what had a warrior like Piggy to do with such frivolous affairs as girls’ parties? He scorned the invitation and stubbornly refused to change his clothes on the eventful afternoon. His mother, therefore, had decreed that he should remain at home in the back yard, so that he might easily be found when needed. He was

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instructed to carry in the ice-cream freezer when called to do so, but the cook had her orders to give to him neither the spoon nor the dasher to scrape, and if there was anything Piggy loved it was ice-cream.

Even Napoleon had gone whistling by, grinning apishly over the back fence at Piggy. "They say fishin's awful good to-day," he called pleasantly as he passed.

That was the last straw and Piggy thought only of revenge as he threw himself on the ground. "I'd like t' scalp girls coz they's a-forever a-doin' somethin' that knocks a man out an' fishin' awful good too," he muttered. "Makes me tired,—th' hull bus'-ness makes me tired, so it does."

His revery was interrupted by two little figures crossing the lawn, carefully wheeling their dolls. "The Trevellyn kids, by gum!" he exclaimed. "Wouldn't that make th'

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baby squeal? Squaws of th' Go-Hawks wheel-in' dolls to a girl's party that makes a brave stay home. Don didn't like their hair, but curls are nothin' t' dolls."

A wicked thought flashed into Piggy's mind. He really liked the twins and had no serious objections to them, but it offended his manly dignity to see them clinging thus to the joys of infancy. Out of sorts with the world himself, he wished to make some one else unhappy. He determined then and there to call the tribe together that very night and demand that dolls share the fate of curls. After he had made this resolution he felt better and even bore heroically the loss of the ice-cream, and heard the musical click of the spoons and plates with indifference. He had made a discovery and thrilled with excitement at the thought of the evening when he should demand satisfaction.

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The nervous tension increased, as one by one the Go-Hawks filed by, homeward bound. He whispered over the back fence to each one that the tribe must meet that night. "All but th' squaws," he added to the chief.

Donald never could bear to have his curiosity aroused and not satisfied, so he jumped over the fence, loitering a few minutes, although he knew it was dangerously near the dinner hour. "What's a-doin', Piggy?" he asked his brother Go-Hawk. Piggy yearned to tell. He knew that his playmate would sympathize deeply with him, for, as Jack expressed it, there was nothing Donald liked to do so well as to "objection" to everything.

"What 'll yer gi' me if I tell?" asked Piggy, with his hands in his pockets while he spat upon the ground.

Donald thought it over. He was not much of a boy to drive a bargain and yet he longed

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to know the secret. "I'll give—well, I'll give you two fried cakes th' next time we make 'em to our house."

Piggy loved the cakes and so the bargain was quickly concluded. "Those Trevellyn kids still play with dolls," he whispered scornfully, "an' they wheel 'em in silly baby buggies. I call that punk. They're our squaws an' they've got t' give up foolishness or git out of th' tribe."

Donald was entranced for he scented trouble. "That's prezactly like it was with their curls a-danglin,' an' course we men won't stand it." The tribe had loyally protected him in the matter of cutting off the hair, so he felt very brave about facing the new trouble.

"You'll stick by me?" asked Piggy.

"Yep, an' somebody 'll get hurt. Must hike now or mebbe I can't come t' th' meetin'

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to-night." With a knowing wink the lads separated to meet later in the evening.

* * * * *

The sun had scarcely set before the Go-Hawks were in their lowly seats on stumps behind Pawnee Dirt Lodge in Broken Arrow Town. The childish faces were full of eager curiosity when Sitting Bull said solemnly, "Our brave warrior, Piggy Runt, has called us together t' tell us somethin'. While we were fishin' this afternoon he scented danger an' we may soon be on th' war-path. Now Piggy, spit it out!"

Piggy rose and swaggered to the front. Following close behind him was Rain-in-the-Face who had promised to stick by him. "I can't make speeches like sitting Bull," began Piggy, "but—"

"Go on," whispered Rain-in-the-Face encouragingly, "ain't I with you?"

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"Our squaws are playin' with dolls," announced the accuser.

"Did you see 'em?" interrupted the chief.

"Yep—they brung 'em t' my kid sister's party—wheeled 'em in baby buggies, too. I was shamed of 'em. Dolls, huh! Great big squaws with dolls!"

"Yep—that's just as bad as th' curls," chimed in Rain-in-the-Face, "an' I movement we scalp 'em!"

"Not th' girls!" exclaimed Sitting Bull in horror.

"No—th' dolls—for we shan't be in a tribe with dolls."

"Mebbe they're just their papposes. Can't squaws take their papposes out a-ridin'?" timidly asked a little chap with freckled face and red and watery eyes, who bore the appropriate name of 'Spotted Wolf.'

"Papposes! Shoot! Papposes—nothin'

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but old saw-dust dolls. I tell you I saw 'em with my own eyes an' I say gim me th' real thing or gim me nothin'. 'Tain't fair t' us warriors." As he spoke thus bravely Piggy struggled to hold his diminutive self as haughtily as possible.

Sitting Bull looked vaguely troubled. "I don't know what t' say. You see, we've all got somethin', dogs, rabbits, chickens or somethin,' an' it kind o' seems like our squaws might have somethin', too. I want t' be fair."

"Huh! You like t' play with girls an' dolls, too, I s'pose, but we fellers don't an' I say you've got t' get rid of these dolls or we'll quit you," announced Rain-in-the-Face.

"You're th' one who's makin' th' fuss so you can tell us what t' do 'bout it," said Jack to Piggy, ignoring the last speaker.

"I've been a-thinkin' we might do like it

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tells 'bout in our readers 'bout Joan of Arc, you know, burn th' pris'ners at th' stake. Long as we're Indians we'd better scalp 'em first an' then burn 'em up."

"Mebbe th' girls won't let us," remarked Rain-in-the-Face.

"They'd let us if they thought it was their duty," quickly responded the loyal chief, "an' I don't s'pose they ought t' play with dolls, not out a-doors anyway where folks can see 'em."

"Let's all bring sticks of wood an' build a big fire to-morrow afternoon," suggested one enthusiastic boy with cruel eyes.

"An' we'll drive a broomstick in th' ground t' tie th' pris'ners to," added another.

"We'd better just invite th' squaws t' come over an' bring their dolls, 'cause they wouldn't come if they knew we wuz goin' to burn 'em," was the caution of another.

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"Let's all wear war paint, only it's so hot it'll most likely run all over us," said Rain-in-the-Face, adding, as usual, a possibility of trouble.

"Th' dolls 'll be just like martyrs an' we never played nothin' like that b'fore," remarked a small lad who yearned for something new.

A sharp, clear whistle recognized by Piggy and holding for him a personal message that demanded instant obedience to its bed-time summons, scattered the tribe unceremoniously.

* * * * *

"Jack said we were t' bring our dolls an' stay all afternoon," said Patience the following morning to Aunt Sallie. "Would you 'vise us, auntie, to let 'em wear their party dresses 'cause they've never been to Jack's house?"

"I believe I would, dear, and I am glad that Jack told you to bring your dolls; it does

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seem so much nicer to auntie for her little girls to play more with their dolls."

"Our children were pretty good at th' party yesterday," said one small mother, and turning to the doll lying on the chair nearby, she added, "Mama's very proud of her precious, an' will you be good to-day?"

Evidently she read the desired reply in the blue eyes that met her own unflinchingly in a way that dolls have, for the mother continued: "I'm glad you say you will, 'cause there may be some other boys there an' I wouldn't want t' be 'shamed of you."

Prudence and Patience had seemed to neglect their dolls of late and so it was with much satisfaction that Miss Sallie observed that they played contentedly with them all the forenoon. The motherly little hearts felt no premonition of the tragedy in store for them—the crisis approaching in the play

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world peopled by their family of dolls. Even though they had been drawn from it by their love for their playmate, Jack, who had always been their staunch champion, giving them rides on his sled in the winter and his pony in the summer, winning them admission into the charmed tribe of Go-Hawks, still the maternal spark in their hearts only slumbered. It was born in them as it is in every little girl, and sooner or later manifests itself in some form or other.

It did not seem strange to their unsuspecting hearts that Jack should instruct them to bring their dolls. They had not much experience with the ways of men. Trustingly, they started forth, and unconscious of approaching disaster the eyes of the girls were as serene as those of their dolls when Jack met them at the barn door.

He conducted them at once into the midst

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of the tribe, assembled in Indian attire. Feathers that had been culled by force from a long suffering rooster nodded ominously, and the bright August sunshine made the paint glitter fiercely on the boyish faces, but the squaws read not these signs aright.

A hickory interview with his father that very morning in the woodshed had not served to heal the wounded spirits of Piggy Runt, and his eyes narrowed cruelly when he beheld the gaily dressed prisoners. He glanced complacently from them to the great pile of brushwood all ready to light. In the center was a broom-handle painted red by his own restless hands. "Dolls 're too silly ever t' get t' Heav'n an' so I painted that stick red 'cause devils 're always red," he explained to Jack a little earlier in the day as he was driving into the ground the stick to which the victims were to be tied.

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“You’ll have t’ stand in th’ middle of th’ ring, Whispering Leaves an’ Running Water, while I bring th’ charges against you,” directed Sitting Bull. The squaws smiled and wondered what the new game was, but since they had always had a good time with Jack they obediently took their places.

“Squaws of the Go-Hawks, it’s my miserable duty t’ inform you that two of our worthy Indians objection to your dolls,” began Sitting Bull, who determined to go at once to the seat of trouble and have a disagreeable duty well over. “They say they’ll quit th’ tribe unless th’ pris’ners are sacrificed.”

The squaws looked vaguely troubled. Then Running Water spoke slowly, “We, we don’t know what sac—sac-recised means,” as though unwilling to admit an intimacy with so large a word without knowing what it portended.

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"It means to-day to burn 'em up," he answered haltingly.

"Burn up Lillie an' Susanna!" exclaimed Whispering Leaves, in horror at such a thought.

"That's what th' warriors demand," answered Sitting Bull, and when he saw the anguish in the twins' eyes he added apologetically, "It's 'cause they're men an' never played with dolls, but—" A generous thought came to him. "We braves 'll go up in th' hay-loft an' leave you relatives 'lone with th' pris'ners t' take your last looks an' say good-bye." So great was the chief's faith in the squaws that he never questioned their giving up their dolls even as they had their curls to meet the demands of the tribe.

The Go-Hawks walked soberly away and the squaws were left alone. They looked at each other speechless, their gaze then wandering to the pile of brushwood ready to light.

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Running Water stole closer to her sister. "I can't let 'em burn Lillie," she whispered. "She's three years old an' never said a cross word t' me—I—don't care 'bout havin' no curls, but I can't let Lillie be burned." "Sitting Bull said we must," responded Whispering Leaves, who possessed sterner ideas of duty and was more capable of self-sacrifice. Another silence followed while each little maid held her beloved close to her breast.

Running Water kissed her child lovingly and it seemed to her that Lillie was begging for life. It was more than her sensitive heart could bear and she threw herself on the ground where she lay, with her dolly clasped close in her arms, and sobbed as never before in her care-free life.

The sight unnerved the braver-hearted Whispering Leaves and she, too, burst into

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tears. "Darling! Darling!" she whispered incoherently to her dolly. "I can't let you get all burned up—I thought mebbe I could—but I can't, I can't," she wailed.

It was thus that Sitting Bull found them a few minutes later, when he came as an emissary from the tribe to ascertain if farewells had not been spoken and if the burning of the martyrs might now proceed. He stood embarrassed in the sight of such keen suffering, for the girls made no effort to conceal their grief.

"Won't you be willing t' let us burn 'em, like brave Joan of Arc?" asked Sitting Bull slowly. "Do [you care so much 'bout them?"

"How'd you like t' have your pony all burned up," asked Whispering Leaves, holding her doll closer and weeping harder than ever.

The chief's kind heart, which usually kept

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him from very deep disgrace with his elders, struggled now to be heard. He wanted to be loyal to his warriors and yet he could not bear to see the squaws weeping. He had never mentioned the fact to anyone, but somehow it had always given him a "sorry feeling," as he would have expressed it, whenever he stopped to think, as he sometimes did, that the twins had no mother, and though he may have been unconscious of it he felt a desire to be good to them.

He hesitated, and the girls believing that the hour of reckoning had come, wept harder than ever. "It's a dirty shame," he muttered to himself, "an' Piggy can get out of th' old tribe if he wants to, but these dolls sha'n't be burned. Just 'cause he got a lickin' this mornin' he wants ev'rybody t' feel bad." Then his face cleared as he made his resolution and a flash of fire came into his brown

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eyes, while his voice shook with excitement. "Your dolls sha'n't be burned. You slip over th' back fence. Run for your lives an' take 'em home."

"But what'll Piggy an' Rain-in-the-Face do t' us?" asked Running Water timidly.

"They won't say anything t' you an' if they do I'll make 'em burn their pets. Now hike or it'll be too late," urged Sitting Bull who did not want the members of the tribe to see the squaws' red and swollen eyes.

They needed no second urging and fairly flew over the ground, disappearing from view just as the Go-Hawks, led by the impatient Piggy, crowded round the barn. There stood the chief alone as the girls had left him; his face was grave and fearless.

"Where are th' squaws? and I choose t' tie th' pris'ners t' th' stake," shouted Piggy.

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"An' I choose t' light th' match," chimed in Rain-in-the-Face, "only it's so kind a-windy mebber it'll go out."

"Th' squaws 've gone home an' so 've th' pris'ners. I sent 'em all home," announced Sitting Bull.

"You did, did you, old softy?" shouted Piggy, wrathfully shaking his little fist.

"Yes, I did," replied Sitting Bull, "an' if you want t' fight, Piggy Runt, come on! I'm ready! An' if you want to fight, Rain-in-the-Face, come on, but you sha'n't burn those dolls; an' if either of you say one mean thing t' th' squaws you've got t' bring your rabbit an' dog an' we'll just tie 'em to that stake an' burn 'em up an' see how it makes you feel. Now if you want t' fight come on!"

Piggy and Rain-in-the-Face looked doubtful about accepting the proposition. The chief glanced scornfully at them and said,

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"I've had 'nough of this bus'ness an' I don't care what you think o' me. If you kids don't want me for your chief you can get 'nother. You can stay here if you want to, but I'm goin' in th' house."

The tear-stained faces of the squaws were too strongly outlined before their chief for him to enjoy playing any more with the members of his tribe that afternoon. He felt on strained relations, but he was not unhappy as he turned and walked off without another word to the astounded Go-Hawks.

"Well, by gum! Wouldn't that get you? I call him an old pot of mush," angrily declared Piggy. "Mushy! Mushy!" he called after the chief.

"Goin' in t' play with his own dolly or sit on his mama's knee I s'pose," sneered Rain-in-the-Face.

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"He's 'fraid t' stay an' fight us kids," said Piggy, who began to feel very brave as the chief disappeared from view.

"We'll smash his face if he comes 'bout us, won't we?" asked Rain-in-the-Face.

"Yer bet yer life! I'm goin' t' lick him 'cause he got chicken-hearted an' spoiled ev'rything. Come on, kids, let's get out o' this an' go down t' th' river."

For want of something better the suggestion was adopted, and the scene of the proposed execution was soon deserted by the bloodthirsty tribe of Go-Hawks.





CHAPTER IV.

THE LITTLE MOTHERS.

AFTER Jack's command to hurry home as fast as they could the twins did not stop running until they had reached their own room, from which they had gone forth but a short time before serene and happy, at peace with the world. They now returned with hearts torn with anguish, yet full of thanksgiving.

"Prudence, I thought the Lord'd forsaken us," said Patience soberly to her sister. "Mothers must feel awful bad to get berefted

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of their children. Did you hear poor Lillie cryin'?"

"Well, you know I wasn't watchin' Lillie 'cause Susanna said to me if I let her get burned up she'd tell God when she got t' Heaven never t' let me come," answered the child whose imagination never seemed to fail her at critical moments.

"Did she say that?" asked Patience in an awed voice. She never doubted the truth of her sister's statements and herself was not far behind her in creative ability. "I did not 'courage my 'flicted child to talk. She cried so hard she couldn't talk. She just shook with sobs," Patience concluded.

"We'll never dare take 'em any place 'gain," said Prudence, "an' children do need fresh air. Sometimes I think we'd better send 'em off t' school an' then nothin' can ever happen. I heard Mrs. Thompson tell

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auntie she never had t' worry 'bout her children since she sent 'em 'way t' school."

"But our children are so young an' hardly strong 'nough t' study. I'm 'fraid Lillie's goin' t' have nervoustration now. See how pale she is."

"She is pale, but I hope you'll be able t' raise her. If she should die, we can have a splendid fun'ral. Jack can ride his pony at th' head of the procession an' you an' I can ride in th' express wagon an' Lillie—"

"Oh, please, Miss Trevellyn, do not talk 'bout dear Lillie havin' a fun'ral 'cause I think she's gettin' better an' it makes me feel bad." The over-wrought nerves of the child gave way and she burst into tears.

"Don't cry," said Prudence penitently, "I never meant t' make you cry an' I'm sure Lillie's lookin' better now." She picked up the doll and examined it carefully. "Just see,

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her cheeks are gettin' red just like she was very healthy." She yearned to comfort her sister whom she never intentionally grieved. She searched her brain quickly for inspiration. "Oh, Pat, Lillie looks t' me just like a girl who's goin' t' get married. Wouldn't it be perfec'y stylish t' have her get married?" she asked coaxingly. "Jack can be th' minister an' we can all throw old shoes full of rice an' Susanna can be a bridesmaid an' you can sit in th' front seat like Mrs. Thompson did an' weep. An' we'll have a weddin' cake an' presents an', oh—that'll be lots splendifer than a fun'ral. Oh! Oh! Can't you see your darling?" she chattered on, hoping to dry the tears and catching the fire of enthusiasm from her own words. "We'll dress her in sky-blue with a long train an' she can walk down th' aisle on her gray-haired father's arm an' Donald can play his mouth harp

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—an’—” The word “Donald” was fatal to happiness at that moment.

“He sha’n’t play it, ’cause he wanted to burn up our daughters,” and the child stamped her foot resentfully.

The loud tones and noise brought Miss Sallie and the professor into the room, the latter having just come home to dinner.

“What is the matter with my little girls?” asked the father, as he glanced from the flushed, excited face of one daughter to the angry, grieved one of the other. The eyes of Patience were full of tears while those of her sister were still red as though she, too, had wept but a short time before.

The heart of Patience had been sorely tried, by the ordeal through which she had passed. She had suffered, no doubt, as keenly as though she were many years older, the doll human and in very grave danger.

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Prudence likewise had grieved, but in this, as in everything else, seemed more quickly to throw off nervous excitement.

As Miss Sallie glanced from one tense little face to the other her own grew grave; she surmised instantly that this was no childish quarrel, and that the seat of the trouble lay deeper. She put her arms tenderly around Prudence who was more calm than her sister. "What is the trouble, dearie? Won't you tell father and auntie what has made you and Patience so unhappy?"

The child looked at her longingly, then replied slowly, "I'd like to tell, auntie, an' get it out of my insides, but mebbe it wouldn't be fair."

Miss Sallie glanced significantly at her brother as much as to say, "We can almost guess where the trouble lies."

"It is only that we want to help you, dears,

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that we ask, and because it grieves us to find you in trouble.”

At these words the heart of Patience could no longer bear its burden alone and she threw her arms impulsively around her father's neck. “I don't care if it isn't fair, I'm goin' t' tell. They wanted t' burn up Lillie an' Susanna, an' we weren't babies t' cry, were we? Wouldn't you cry, too, if your children were t' be tied t' a stick an' burned up? An' th' stick was red an' it was an' awful sight.”

Prudence never could bear to remain long in the background and now that the ice was broken added eagerly, “An' we were so frightened an' Susanna cried, ‘Save me, mama!’ An' Pat said that Lillie's body just shook with sobs an' then we cried 'cause we love our children an' then Jack felt bad an' told us t' hike an' Pat can't seem t' stop cryin'.”

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"An', father," chimed in Patience, "I'll never part from Lillie another minute—an' my head aches so—an' please, father, I don't want t' go down t' dinner, an' I'd like t' sit all comfy here on your knee all night."

At these words Miss Sallie withdrew, taking Prudence with her. She determined to return later with the other child's dinner and tuck her into bed for the night, trusting to Nature to give her the rest she needed.

The father drew the trembling little figure close in his arms, rocking her gently back and forth until the sobs gradually ceased.

"Father is very, very sorry for you, darling," he whispered.

"You'd have cried, wouldn't you, if they'd wanted to burn me all up like that Ark girl?"

"Cried! It would have broken my heart, little one, and father does not wonder you

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cried, but Lillie is safe here in our arms and we will try to forget her danger, dear."

"It wasn't Jack—it was those other boys—Jack saved her life."

"I wouldn't play with the boys, if they make you feel so bad," said the father. "I fear they are too rough for my little girls."

"Oh—but—father, they shiver you so. Sometimes when we play war you shiver up and down your back. I just ache, sometimes. Did you ever ache, just 'cause you're having such a good time you couldn't hold it all? It's grand, father."

Professor Trevellyn looked at the child thoughtfully and then said: "Father knows one thing and that is that he loves his daughters better than anything else in the world and one of them is very, very tired and had better be tucked into bed. I will call auntie to bring a little something to eat, and then

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she will help you and Lillie to undress. Remember, you are father's brave girl. Here comes auntie now. Auntie, here is a tired little girl and I am sure she will enjoy what you have brought her on the tray. My! My! those blue dishes look like a party."

Miss Sallie gently coaxed the child to eat and then, as she made ready for bed the slender figure, she thought tenderly of another Patience with whom she used to romp years before, and to whom also everything in their little play world was intensely real. The sweet memories of other days made her place her hand if possible more lovingly than usual on the head of Patience as she knelt by her side to repeat the childish prayer.

"Auntie, would you care if I didn't say 'Now I lay me' to-night, but made up my own prayer?"

"You may say whatever you wish, dear."

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The child hesitated and then began haltingly: "Dear God—my father says you watch over everything, but I think you must've fallen 'sleep this afternoon an' did not see poor Lillie an' Susanna who prit' near got burned up like that Ark girl in Jack's reader. Please do not go t' sleep any more in th' day time. Pinch yourself to keep awake an' make all those boys feel sorry for our pains an' make us good girls. Do not forget t' stay awake. This is all for to-night. Amen!"

Neither Miss Sallie nor Patience heard a slight noise in the hall. The child fell asleep almost as soon as her head touched the pillow and then Miss Sallie went to search for the other little maid to bring her to bed. She was somewhat surprised when Prudence also requested that she, too, might be permitted to change her prayers to suit the needs of the

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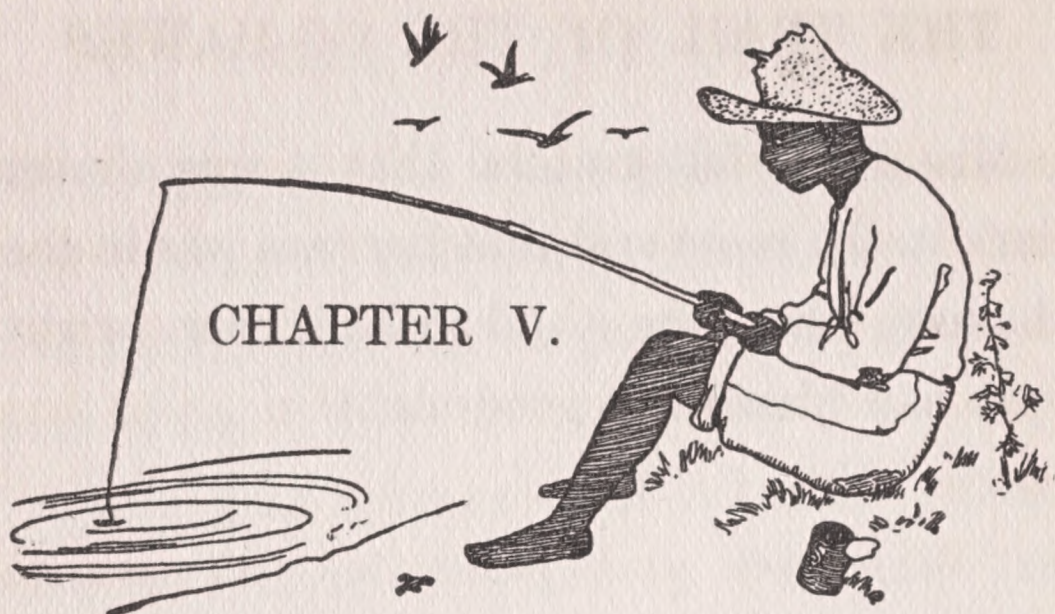
hour. She did not know that the little one had overheard her sister's prayer and that her imagination had been actively at work ever since.

Aunt Sallie assented with a smile. "Dear God in Heaven, I think by this time you have digested my sister's prayer. You're not what folks think you are. I think you must be like Jack's father with just one boy in the family. You should have been a mother an' had girls an' then you'd have watched over our daughters better an' not let 'em get 'flicted. It's your duty t' punish those wicked boys, who 'most broke our hearts. S'pose you turn Donald's hair red an' never let it stop growin', an' you'd better make it curl an' make Piggy stay little always, an' make him shrink some like our flannel petticoats did. Please do these things. Amen!"

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Miss Sallie felt grateful that it was almost dark in the room and that her face was in the shadow when the child opened her bright eyes and kissed her good-night.





NAPOLEON'S TEMPTATION.

THE Go-Hawks had held no regular session since that eventful afternoon when they attempted to burn the dolls at the stake. While not formally discussing the affair, each felt in his heart that it had not been a success.

Donald did not forget his promise to Piggy of two fried cakes in return for the secret entrusted to him. In his boy's code of ethics he regarded this promise as a debt of honor, so the first day that he found a crock of doughnuts on the pantry shelf he helped himself to two of the largest for Piggy, whom

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he sallied forth to find. The home of the latter was nearby and he carried the cakes in his grimy hands. Donald was not overjoyed while on the way to Piggy's to run across Jack.

"Where you goin' and what you goin' to do with those fried cakes?" pleasantly asked Jack, who was ever ready to bury the hatchet.

"I promised 'em to Piggy for tellin' me somethin' I wanted t' know."

"Say, Don, tell Piggy for me that I think he'd better give those cakes to Pat and Prue. I'll be down in a minute."

Donald dutifully delivered the message to Piggy, who, having just finished his dinner, was not as hungry as usual. Nevertheless he eyed the cakes greedily as he hung them on a nail in the barn. Though he had not determined to sacrifice them to the twins, at least he would postpone eating them for a while.

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When shortly after, Jack came whistling into the barn, the cakes were the first things that caught his eye. Slapping Piggy jovially on the back he said, "You're an old brick. I knew you'd do the square thing by the squaws."

"I ain't said I would yet," replied Piggy.

"I know, but you haven't eaten them. I think we ought to square ourselves with the girls, don't you, Donald?" appealed Jack anxiously.

"They oughtn't t' be such cry babies 'bout their old dolls, but I don't s'pose Aunt Sallie 'll ever give us any more cookies if we don't make up, so I s'pose we'd better."

"'Tisn't that," answered Jack thoughtfully, "only they always play everything we want, an' Pat feeds my pony sugar an' I saw her get a piece of meat out of th' ice-box for your dog so I think we ought t' be

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respectable t' their dolls. They like their dolls just as well as we like our pets, an' they've never tried to hurt anything of ours."

"What'd you have us do? Put on dresses and cart round dolls I s'pose," remarked Piggy sarcastically.

Jack's eyes flashed. "You know better'n that, but I want you to show 'em we're sorry 'cause all th' other fellows are sorry—but you, mebbe."

Piggy began to weaken, not wanting to be in ill-favor with the Go-Hawks, who were responsible for so many of his good times. "What d'you want us to do?" he asked, not very pleasantly, it must be confessed, but it was a concession that he asked at all.

"I think we'd better ask Aunt Sallie if we can't come over an' spend th' afternoon an'

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have th' girls bring out their dolls and we'll play anythin' they want. They'll always be 'fraid o' us till we show 'em we won't hurt their dolls."

"Yes, but mebbe they won't play with us," suggested Donald.

"We'll think up such a good game that they can't help it."

"I thought you just said you were goin' t' let 'em choose th' game," interrupted Piggy.

"That'd be better an' I'll see 'bout it to-morrow. Don't forget 'bout the fried cakes. It's nice of you, Piggy, 'cause I know you love 'em," concluded Jack as he rose to go, anxious to find the other Go-Hawks and put his plan in operation.

The lads looked curiously after his retreating figure. "I never saw such a looney," remarked Piggy, who was struggling inwardly with the question of the cakes.

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"Yep, but I'm a-goin' to stick by him, 'cause you've an awful good time 'fore you're through. I got t' go home, too," replied Donald and off he started leaving Piggy alone in the barn.

Piggy looked cautiously around to make sure he was alone, then stole over to the cakes. He decided to smell them. Then he concluded to take a bite off one, to see how good it might be. That bite was almost the undoing of Piggy's sacrifice. It seemed to him that he had never tasted anything quite so good and he nibbled just a little more. "Darn th' luck! It's them wimmen folks makin' more trouble for us men." He yearned as never for anything before to eat those cakes, yet so strong was the chief's hold over his warriors that Piggy wished to please him although not approving the method adopted.

"But how 'll I ever get th' old things to

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'em?" he questioned in his disappointment, thus referring to the cakes that were freshly made that day. He then recognized Napoleon's whistle in the street and called the little colored boy into the barn. "Do you see those cakes?" he demanded. "Well, I'm goin' to send you with 'em to th' squaws."

Napoleon's eyes looked hungrily at the cakes. "One's got a piece out of it," he murmured.

"You can take a bite to match it out of th' other for takin' 'em up. Ring th' bell an' give 'em to Aunt Sallie an' tell her who they're for. Don't talk any more'n you can help an' don't get th' cakes any dirtier'n you can help," instructed Piggy.

Napoleon took the cakes in his hands and obediently started off. It was a trying ordeal to him, for he was seldom so near to cakes as he was at that moment. His mother



For greafer safety Napoleon stole behind a tree.

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had been away washing all day and he had eaten nothing since morning more appetizing than cold potatoes. As he neared the Trevellyn home his heart grew heavy and he began to walk more slowly. He knew it to be a fact that whole jars of cookies were made at that house every week.

"It's wuth two bites to bring those cakes up here, so 'tis," he said to himself. No one was in sight, but for greater safety Napoleon stole behind a tree. He took one bite and a heavenly smile of satisfaction crossed his dark little face. "'Twould look all right if there's a bite just like that out of th' other one," he mused. He measured that bite with exactness, then holding the remnants carefully he ran whistling across the Trevellyn lawn to the front door.

Miss Sallie responded. "Good morning, Napoleon," she greeted him pleasantly.

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"How—do—I—I've brung your kids, our squaws, some cakes, here they be." With these words he offered them.

"Cakes for our little girls? And are they from yourself?"

"No—Piggy, he sent 'em. I guess he's kind a-sorry he wanted to burn up their dolls, so he didn't eat th' cakes hisself but he sent 'em. They are nice cakes." Napoleon Bonaparte knew whereof he spoke. It seemed wonderful to his cake-yearning soul that Piggy could bring himself to part with them. He looked at them wistfully. "I tried not to get 'em any dirtier'n I could help." Then, as though he could no longer bear the tempting sight, he turned abruptly away. "Got t' hike," he said over his shoulder.

"Napoleon! Napoleon! Do not hurry; just come back for a few minutes, dear," called Aunt Sallie.

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The ragged urchin turned obediently. His little life had not been all play with the Go-Hawks and he had learned obedience. However, his face was happy as he slowly turned. Try as he might his eyes wandered from Miss Sallie to the cakes.

She saw the wistfulness in the boy's eyes, and the bites taken out of the cakes were full of meaning to her. She felt that the child must be really hungry and that it had been a trying ordeal to him to execute the commission. "There's no one else at home and I want you to come into the library and talk a while."

He followed her shyly and sat down on the extreme edge of a low chair, while Miss Sallie took a seat nearby. With a thoughtfulness born of experience with the twins, she considerately left the cakes in the hall.

"I did not want you to leave, Napoleon,

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without first telling you how pleased I am to know that you and Piggy are so kind to my little girls. It was generous of Piggy to send his cakes and very kind of you to bring them. They seem to be very nice."

Napoleon was becoming excited, for it was seldom that he received so many kind words all at once. The sensation fairly intoxicated him. "Yep, those cakes are awful good, but I guess th' cook didn't have 'nough dough t' make 'em th' same." The bites he had taken were beginning to trouble him.

"Yes, a cook very often runs out of 'dough,' as you call it," replied Aunt Sallie. "I only want to tell you how nice I think it is of you to have brought them so carefully. It must be a great comfort to your mother to have such a son."

The boy's face was radiant for a moment

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and then clouded as he answered slowly, "Yes, but she licks me sometimes."

Miss Sallie ignored the admission and continued, "I want you to do something for me, will you, Napoleon?"

He nodded his woolly head from which he had forgotten to remove the ragged cap.

"Here are two oranges. Eat one yourself and take the other with my thanks to Piggy." She took two large oranges from a plate on the table and escorted her small guest to the door. "Don't forget to thank Piggy, and I thank you myself."

The little fellow turned a handspring or two for joy as he ran down the street. "It's jes' like I wuz white," he muttered to himself.



CHAPTER VI.



THE WEDDING.

THE Go-Hawks to a man repented of their attempted execution of Lillie and Susanna and were now as enthusiastic in their desire for reparation as they had been interested in making ready for the tragedy. Even Piggy felt magnanimous; the orange sent in return for his generous gift of cakes had softened his heart.

For an entire week the twins had not played with the Go-Hawks. The boys had begun to miss the willing hands and feet de-

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voted to their service. The admiring awe with which the squaws followed their every movement had been very pleasing to their youthful self-importance. Ever since the night of their admission into the tribe they had been appreciative spectators of all the Indian antics.

"Seems most like somebody's dead without th' squaws an' I movement we square up th' hull business," remarked Spotted Wolf one evening to his fellow Go-Hawks.

"Huh! I'm willin' to do anythin'," said another.

"So'm I—"

"Here, too, Pete," chimed in a third voice.

"They're afraid of us now," said Jack ruefully, "an' Aunt Sallie said to-day they never can play with us 'less we show 'em we won't hurt their dolls nor anythin' else that is theirs."

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"How'd we know what's a-comin' that we might have to hurt?" asked Donald.

"How'd you know you won't get a lickin' to-morrow? You don't keep a-thinkin' 'bout it all th' time, do you?" retorted Jack.

"I like Aunt Sallie," announced Napoleon, whose heart and palate cherished sweet memories, "an' I think we orter make it up."

"Are you willin' to do anythin' they want?" asked the chief a little doubtfully.

"Yep!" they sang in chorus.

"Well," said Jack slowly, "I told Prue that we'd play anything they wanted for one afternoon, an' we'd treat their dolls like ladies."

"What'd she say?" an eager voice interrupted.

"She said she thought it'd be grand t' have a weddin' an' all us in it."

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"A weddin'! well, wouldn't that make you want t' go t' Sunday school?" ejaculated one little chap.

"Yes, an' Aunt Sallie said she wasn't sure we'd behave so she'd rather have it over there an' I guess she's goin' to have refreshments," continued Jack.

"Oh! Mebbe it'll be a cake with candles on it," interrupted Napoleon with shining eyes.

"What yer givin' us? Candles is for birthday cakes. Guess you ain't never been to no swell weddin's," interrupted Piggy with superiority.

Poor Napoleon could not deny the charge, so he sat down abashed. He was none the less hopeful, however, about the cake.

"When'll we know what we've got to do? I don't like a lot o' things a-jumpin' on me t' do at th' last second," said Donald.

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"I'm goin' over there now t' talk it over an' you kids can wait here till I come back, or I'll see you to-morrow," answered Jack as he started away. A little later he was seated with Prudence on the Trevellyn lawn. Patience had gone shopping with Miss Sallie.

"The fellows 're are all awful sorry 'bout th' doll bus'ness, an' we want t' square it an' show you we wouldn't harm a hair of their heads," began Jack.

"Will they play weddin'?" anxiously asked Prudence.

"Yes, an' we'll do ev'rything you want."

Prudence could scarcely believe that she heard aright—that the fourteen warriors were at their command and they but squaws. "Oh, Jack!" she gasped, "oh! how perfec'ly stylish! let's plan a weddin'. You know Lillie's got t' be th' bride. She's Pat's child."

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"Wouldn't you rather have your child th' bride?" asked the boy.

"Well, I would," she answered truthfully, "but you see I made Patience feel bad by plannin' a fun'ral for Lillie, so then I had t' plan her gettin' married. So I s'pose she'd better be th' bride. And anyway Susanna's feelin's 'll not be hurt 'cause I asked her if she'd care an' she said she'd hate t' leave home."

Jack's grave face did not smile. He was very much in earnest in his desire to make amends, and he entered heartily into the spirit of the wedding. "I don't wonder that you didn't want her t' be burned," he said.

"She's always been good an' perlite an' never said a cross word t' me since her father died. I'm a widow, you know," she concluded, giving rein as usual, to her fancy.

"I didn't know that," answered Jack.

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"Oh, yes, Susanna's father died six years before she was born. He was left out in th' rain an' soaked t' death an' he's buried in th' attic. Auntie says I'm young t' be a widow, but, oh, it's th' grandest fun. Why don't you play it sometimes, Jack? Have you any children?"

"No, but I have a pony. He's just as good as a child," was the response.

"Patience has a husband. He was given t' her th' Christmas after Lillie was born. So you see, if Lillie's th' bride, she can walk down th' aisle on her gray-haired father's arm, like that weddin' I went to, only his hair is yellow."

"But dolls don't walk," objected Jack.

The child puckered her brows thoughtfully. "I tell you. Let's have th' weddin' outdoors right here," she added excitedly running over to a large oak tree. "I can see it

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all, Jack. I went t' a weddin' with Aunt Sallie last winter an' so I can play it grand. We'll put our seats over here an' all th' other dolls who aren't anything can sit there."

"What'll I be?"

"Oh, you must be th' minister. Patience an' I can sit on th' front seat an' cry an' cry like Mrs. Thompson did. Lillie an' her father can ride up th' aisle in th' old express wagon an' it'll be drawn by an inky black steed, that's Napoleon, you know. He can be hitched up an' have a plume in his hair like th' horses wore at that big fun'ral. I thought that looked perfec'ly stylish."

"How you plan things," interrupted Jack.

"Yes, an' that isn't half," she answered complacently. "We'll want t' have a band. They can sit up in th' cherry tree so's th' music can float. Donald can play his mouth harp an' Ginger can pound his drum an'

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Squint must bring his horn. They can play some hymns and coon songs. Won't it be grand?" The child's eyes fairly danced.

"How'll you get th' groom there?" asked the chief.

"We haven't got a groom yet, but I guess we can get one by Saturday an' my auntie can dress him. I guess he'd better ride with Lillie an' her father."

"What 'll Piggy do?"

"Piggy can ring the sleigh-bells when we come out o' church."

"It isn't winter," objected Jack.

"Well, I know it, but this is th' 'Piscopal church an' bells must ring an' th' carriages come an' th' band 'll play an' then we'll have refreshments. An' let's have invitations. Will you write 'em to-night?"

"Yes. Let's write one now so I'll know how an' what to say," he answered, and as



"I'll write what you want."

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the children's heads were bent over a sheet of paper he continued, "I'll write what you want."

They labored earnestly and when the invitation was concluded it read: "Miss Patience Trevellyn invites you to come and see her oldest dawter get married on Satterday afternoon at two o'clock. Her weading will be under a tree and if you can bring a preasant leave it under the haw tree. If it rains we will have Lillie get married next Satterday." Jack's prudent forethought had suggested the last sentence.

"It'll be perfec'ly stylish t' have invitations an' I think we'll have the nicest time we ever did an' oh, I could talk 'bout it all night," said Prudence breathlessly.

"I must go back t' th' tribe an' tell 'em what there's t' do," answered Jack rising.

"An' I'll go in an' talk t' Lillie 'cause she

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don't know yet that she's goin' t' be married. Good-bye."

"So-long," called Jack as he disappeared from view.

When Miss Sallie and Patience returned they found Prudence in the children's room with all the dolls she could muster 'round her.

"Oh, auntie an' Pat!" she exclaimed. "Jack's been here an' Lillie's goin' t' get married Saturday—an' they're all comin' here t' play it—an' Pat, you'n I are t' sit on th' front seat'n cry—an' auntie, won't you dress a husband for us?"

"Have you told Lillie yet?" asked Patience with motherly solicitude.

"Yes, an' she said she'd like a husband an' so auntie, you'll dress one, won't you? 'cause o' course Lillie can't get married 'thout a husband."

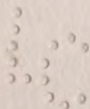
Auntie smilingly assented and during the

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next few days entered with enthusiasm into the plans. Appreciating the fact that the boys regretted the heartache they had caused, she determined to make the afternoon a happy one to all.

Lillie's wedding day dawned clear and bright. The twins worked like beavers all the morning getting things in readiness. Miss Sallie decided to interfere as little as possible and to permit the children's fancy to take its own course. She busied herself with the refreshments, having before her eyes the hungry face of Napoleon as she had last seen it. She desired that he, of all the children, should for once have his hunger satisfied.

Prudence was in her element and her little figure often flitted in and out of the house. When Jack suggested the need of ribbons to form an aisle for the bridal party she took all her own and her sister's hair ribbons,



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old and new, and knotted them together.

To the sorrow of the neighborhood the band practiced the entire morning. No two of its members were familiar with the same tune, but the squaws were well satisfied. At last every arrangement was completed, the dolls dressed, the guests assembled and the happy hour had arrived.

With one accord the braves concluded to attend in war-paint and feathers, as a surprise to the squaws and because they enjoyed dressing in Indian attire. Napoleon, who had received a smile from Aunt Sallie as he entered the yard, instantly and cheerfully consented to be the "inky black steed," harnessed to the express wagon.

Patience and Prudence, who had felt it proper to follow Mrs. Thompson's example at her daughter's wedding and sit on the front seat and weep, almost forgot to do so,

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for most inspiring was the music and absorbing the ceremony.

As the minister, Jack did his duty wonderfully, fearfully. His improvised service answered every purpose. At its conclusion came the wild clanging of Piggy Runt's sleigh-bells, while the band played lustily. The "inky black steed" took the wedding party down the aisle with such spirit and dash that it brought whoops of delight from the assembled braves. Squint was so happy that peace had again overtaken the tribe that he stood on his head again and again and, for very joy, knocked Irish down. At this affront the blood of the latter's ancestors rose and a fight might have resulted, had not Aunt Sallie opportunely appeared bearing a great tray of cake. Lemonade and fruit followed.

"She says we kin hev all we want," announced Piggy.

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Napoleon overheard these comforting words and taking his cake stole behind the barn, for he wished to be alone in the extremity of his happiness. He sat down on the soft grass and gave his attention solely to the business in hand. "Kin hev all we want," he whispered rapturously over and over again. He heard Miss Sallie going into the house and followed her. "Kin I hev some more of everythin'?" he begged shyly.

"Oh, it is you, is it, Napoleon?" she asked as she cut an extra large piece of cake.

"Yes'm, it's me," he answered as he hastened out of the door. A little later he returned. "Kin I hev some more of everythin', Aunt Sallie?" he inquired.

As she filled his hands full to overflowing it seemed to her she had never seen a face so radiant with happiness. She thought of it again and again that evening, after the last

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child had scampered home and the lawn and house were beginning to assume their usual aspect.

"Did you have a happy afternoon?" she asked the twins. "And how are the bride and groom?"

"They're pretty well, thank you," answered Patience, "an' Prudence said that Lillie's husband's a hard-workin' man for he told her he worked in the cemetery an' had t' get up early an' dig all th' graves."

"Yes, auntie," quoth Prudence earnestly, "everythin' was perfec'ly stylish." In the child's estimation she could give no higher praise than this.

Thus as the sun sank behind the hills, peace descended upon the tribe of Go-Hawks, and the blood-thirsty braves and their timid squaws were again united.



CHAPTER VII.

A CIRCUS.

FOR more than a week excitement had run high in the neighborhood of the Carroll home. The Go-Hawks were to give a circus, and day or night it was the absorbing topic of conversation. The barn was headquarters for the troupe, and the lot at the rear was converted into a circus ground. Practicing on the home-made trapeze, with ancient bed quilts and comforters to soften the numerous falls, was the program for every afternoon. The twins had won much admiration for the

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manner in which they walked the tight rope—a performance it was well for them that Aunt Sallie did not see. However, tight rope walking did not wholly satisfy the ambition of Prudence.

“Isn’t there something else that we can do, Jack?” she asked one evening.

“How’d you like to be a side show, you and Pat? You might be th’ fat lady with somethin’ dreadful th’ matter with you, or a giantess an’ stand on a box in th’ tent.”

Prudence regarded the suggestions doubtfully. It was too inactive to please the restless child. “May we be anything we can think up t’ s’prise th’ boys?” she asked.

“Sure thing,” answered the chief, “but get up somethin’ lively an’ different from anythin’ else, ’cause you two’ll be th’ only lady actors in this show.”

“What’d you rather be than anythin’ else in

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th' world?" asked Prudence on the way home.

"Oh, I'd rather be a beautiful princess or th' president's wife or—"

"But that won't do for a circus," interrupted Prudence.

"Well, then let's be bareback riders an' go round an' round th' ring on our horses an' Napoleon can stand in th' middle an' crack a whip at us," continued Patience, "only where 'll we get th' horses?"

"We'll have just pretend ones. We can ride broomsticks. This circus mustn't be like any other circus, 'cause Jack said it must be different."

"If we ride broomsticks then how can we be bareback riders?" asked Patience.

Prudence studied the question and then her eyes brightened. "I tell you! We can cut the backs out of our waists an' then we'd be bareback riders."

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"Auntie wouldn't like it."

"Dear me, Pat, I never saw such a girl. One'd s'pose you were 'bout two years old, an' here you are with your children gettin' married. You mustn't get in th' habit of thinkin' 'bout things t' worry over. Jack says it's always more comfortable not t' worry 'bout anythin' till ev'rythin's all over. Course Auntie won't care an' I wouldn't be s'prised if she rode bareback herself when she was little. She told father she'd a strong back 'cause she exercised it when she was little. If we *are* goin' t' be bareback riders we have t' have bare backs. Our backs are not Auntie's backs are they?"

Patience could not withstand such arguments and even to her it did seem that they might do as they pleased about their own backs. Remembering that Donald liked to use scissors they decided to ask him to cut

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the backs out of their waists the day of the circus.

Donald—fussy little Donald, whose sense of humor was scarcely normal, asked to be the clown and Jack, divining at once the humor of the idea, consented.

When the day arrived, coming slowly as circus days have a habit of doing, a good-sized audience assembled on the lawn and took seats on the grass. Two of the Indians sold pop-corn and peanuts, crying their wares in the most approved manner.

The audience was a little impatient and while waiting for the performance threw peanut shells at one another. To amuse themselves some of the more active played leapfrog. The gate-keeper had a fight with two small urchins, who were determined to see the circus and had not the necessary eight pins to pay for admission.

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"You needn't think this is a charity show," sarcastically called the victorious to the vanquished.

The audience was appreciative, cheering everything and encoring every performer. The twins had managed to walk the tight rope and return to the barn with no greater mishap than torn stockings. They then began to make ready for their great bareback feat. Donald admired the calm nerve of the girls when he cut the backs out of their waists.

"They were not half bad squaws after all," he whispered to Piggy. During the cutting, Napoleon, who had been provided with a horsewhip, stood by in awed silence. He had never in his life owned a piece of apparel that was whole and it was past his comprehension how any one could deliberately cut up good clothes.

"You squaws 'll probably catch your death

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o' cold with your bare backs. I wouldn't be s'rprised if you got consumption," suggested, from force of habit, the ever depressing Donald.

"It's 'most as good as goin' barefoot," answered Prudence, who was busy pinning to her short skirt the tinsel she had borrowed from the Christmas tree supplies.

"Oh, Pat, you do look perfec'ly stylish," she whispered enthusiastically to her sister a minute later as they pranced forth on their broomstick steeds.

They heard Jack announcing their names and thrilled with pride when he added, "no other circus in th' world has such a bareback ladies' feat. We own it and it's worth a hundred pins t' see. This is th' last time th' bareback ladies 'll appear in this country, for after th' performance to-day they leave at once for their home in China."

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Round and round the ring they rode to the wide-eyed amazement of the spectators. As Napoleon cracked his whip they leaped off their broomstick steeds and then on again. Their cheeks grew red from excitement, as faster and faster they flew, finally returning breathless to the barn, with the wild applause ringing sweetly in their ears.

"I mean t' be a bareback rider forever," announced Patience, "but," she continued aghast,—“what 'll we wear over our backs goin' home now? I don't believe auntie an' father'd like t' have us walk home with bare backs.”

"We can hang grapevines over our shoulders," replied resourceful Prudence. "Anyhow some heathens don't have any clothes ever, an' we mustn't mind 'bout a piece o' ours bein' gone," she added severely. "There goes th' clown, oh, lookee!"

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Donald, dressed in pajamas, his face covered with flour paste, tried hard to be funny. However, his natural temperament was now against him, and he made poor headway. When the performance was about half over Jack called Donald to a secluded nook in the barn.

"Say, kid," he whispered, "use a little more ginger an' make ev'rybody laugh harder."

"How?" asked matter-of-fact Donald. "I ain't got any ginger, have you?"

"I don't mean real ginger, but just do somethin' funny, you know. Catch Susie round th' waist, 'cause she don't like boys a little bit, an' give her a kiss an' let on it's all her fault. Say somethin' funny."

"But what'll I say?" persisted the clown, aghast at the task before him and knowing that he must obey.

"You might say 'unhand me villian! I

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thought you were my sister,' or somethin' like that," instructed Jack.

Donald started forth, fearful and unhappy. "Unhand, unhand me, unhand me," he repeated over and over. At that moment there was a pause in the performance. The audience saw the clown and waited to be amused, for was it not his province?

The uncomfortable clown walking round and round the ring made a dash at unsuspecting Susie. He kissed her hastily on the spot nearest which chanced to be her freckled nose and shouted in wild terror, "unhand, unhand me sister. I thought we were a sister." He then fled to the barn, tripping on a stray board and tearing his foot cruelly on a rusty nail. He gave one sharp cry of pain; then struggled to control himself.

"Poor old Don," said Jack to the sufferer. "It's all my fault 'cause I made you ginger

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up. I'll close the circus up, 'cause they've had eight pins worth anyhow an' I'll let you ride home on my pony," he concluded, ruefully looking at the bleeding foot.

He then walked thoughtfully to the circus grounds. As chief of the Go-Hawks he felt it was a fitting occasion for him to make a speech. "Circus speculators an' friends," he began, addressing the audience. "It's my painful duty t' tell you that th' circus must quit an' go home. Our worthy an' honor'ble clown, Donald Brown, has been misfortunate 'nough t' get hurt on an old ten-penny nail an' he's all covered with blood. This has cast a gloom over th' circus and I must take his remnants home. So'll you kindly walk out quietly?"

The majority of the audience was under ten years and possessed somewhat scanty vocabularies. They did not understand the

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meaning of all the speaker's words, and some were not positive but that Donald had been killed. However, they all knew that Jack wished them to go home and they trudged away.





HALF MOURNING.

THE clown of the Go-Hawks was ill, the result of his fall on the rusty nail. He tossed feverishly from side to side in his little bed, raving in his delirium. "I don't like long yeller curls a-danglin' an' I don't like dolls. Do I, mother?" he would ask pleadingly. "I like th' squaws though, mother, an' don't say I don't, 'cause I do an' now they're yeller all over. Take 'em away! Take 'em away!" he screamed. "I want t' see th' Indians," and thus his mind wandered on all through the long summer day.

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Donald, lean and lank, who had grown too fast to accumulate much flesh and whose head seemed too heavy for his body, was a familiar figure in the western town. He had a queer fashion of peering at one through his glasses and a strongly developed habit of raising objections to everything. As a member of the illustrious tribe of Go-Hawks, whom no amount of punishing nor threatening could intimidate, much less scatter, he was somewhat known to local fame. The news of his serious illness was received with much interest, and, among his fellow Go-Hawks caused the greatest consternation. Sitting Bull assembled his tribe in the hayloft of Pawnee Dirt Lodge, that was one of the favorite meeting places and plotting grounds. There was no joking among the youngsters that afternoon; they took their places quietly, their faces full of a nameless anxiety.

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"Indians," began Sitting Bull soberly, "it's my unworthy duty to call you together t' perform a sad bus'ness. I heard my mother tell my father that Rain-in-the-Face was most likely t' die to-night." A sob arrested the speaker's attention. It was Running Water who could not bear to think of Rain-in-the-Face in pain, and because she wept, Whispering Leaves wept. Sitting Bull felt that he must suggest something to cheer his Indians, though his own heart was heavy.

"Don't cry, but let's do somethin' t' show our 'preciation of our sick brave. I once went t' a service with father—his lodge gave it—an' they each got up an' said a lot o' nice things 'bout their departed brothers. We might do this now for Rain-in-the-Face an' mebbe it'd make us feel better an' then we can think o' somethin' else. Let's have a silent prayer," suggested Sitting Bull. The

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Go-Hawks who usually spent their time plotting mischief were silent as directed.

"As your chief I s'pose it's up t' me t' say a few words first," said Sitting Bull. "Our sufferin' Rain-in-the-Face is full of virtue. He goes t' Sunday school when he'd rather go fishin'. When he stuck a pin on th' teacher's seat and she sat down on it he said he was sorry."

"Yes, an' Rain-in-the-Face always gives me half his apple at school," chimed in Running Water.

"When I tore my dress he went home with me an' told auntie he did it, 'cause he didn't want me t' get scolded," added Whispering Leaves.

"Yes, but I bet yer, he never told her he cut yer curls off," interrupted Piggy.

"We're tellin' good things to-day, Piggy, so shut up," commanded Sitting Bull sternly.

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"An' when I cut my toe he tied it up," said another.

"When I had th' sore throat an' couldn't go out o' doors he made a big snow man in our yard for me t' see," offered Spotted Wolf.

"Yes, an' he hooked all his mother's roses an' gave 'em t' me t' put on 'Lizbeth's grave on her birthday," sobbed a lad whose baby sister's death had been his first great sorrow.

"When his mother gave a party he asked the cook to lemme lick th' ice-cream freezer an' it was bully," asserted Little Smoke.

Thus round and round the circle were offered eulogies to Rain-in-the-Face until in reviewing his many virtues the childish hearts grew lighter.

"Say, if all you Indians 'll wait up here in th' hay," said Sitting Bull, "I'll take Whispering Leaves, we'll go an' see if we can find somethin' we can do t' show Rain-in-the-Face

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an' his mother how sorry we are." The tribe assented and the two started away.

"Where'll we go?" asked Whispering Leaves.

"It's best t' ask some one who's had experience in dealin' with people at death's door," answered the boy gravely. "Let's go t' th' undertaker's. I know him an' he let me ride on th' hearse once," he added in an awed voice.

The undertaker was in his office, and, even though he may have been surprised to receive a call from the two sober-faced children, he did not disclose the fact.

"What can I do for you, sir?" he asked Sitting Bull, who stood cap in hand.

"I want some advice," replied the chief. "What do people do when their friends are dead to show how sorry they are? Can't they wear somethin' or do somethin'?"

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The undertaker studied the question before replying. "Folks are very different about those things, but some men wear bands of crape on their arms or hats."

"Seems t' me I once heard my mother say somethin' 'bout half mournin'," ventured Sitting Bull. "Would it be too much trouble t' tell us what that means?"

"I guess folks consider violet color half mournin'—" just then the telephone bell rang and the undertaker was called away.

"Guess that's 'bout all we need t' know anyhow," said the chief as they started home. "You see, Rain-in-the-Face is only 'bout half dead, so we wouldn't wear crape, but if we can find a vi'let thing we'll cut that up an' put bands of it on our caps an' arms an' stand in front of their house an' mourn for a while. We can walk up an' down two or three times, an' Mrs. Brown 'll see us an'

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know we're in half mournin' for our warrior."

"Oh, Jack! Jack!" interrupted Whispering Leaves, in her enthusiasm forgetting to use his title as chief; "Aunt Sallie has a vi'let tea jacket, an' it'd be perfec'ly stylish for half mournin' you know, an' she's out t' a party—an' I'll run home an' get it—she won't care—'cause it's for a worthy charity an' I heard her tell father that she longed t' help all worthy charities an' she wanted t' teach us t' do so." There was silence for a minute.

"It's all silk an' don't you think it'll be good 'nough?" urged the child.

"Yes," the chief answered slowly, "but I was thinkin' what'll Aunt Sallie say?"

"I know," she replied, "but we can't waste time thinkin' 'bout that, 'cause Rain-in-the-Face might get clear dead by mornin' an' auntie might have on her black petticoat

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so we couldn't get it, so I think we'd better hurry an' get in on th' half mournin'."

These practical arguments settled the matter and in another half hour the silk tea jacket was cut into strips and adorned the children's caps, while a band with a bow was tied round each arm. They walked two abreast down the quiet, shaded street until they reached the Brown home, before which stood a physician's horse and buggy. They marched sedately up and down the walk, not a smile crossing their faces and then they seated themselves in an even row across the lawn. It was here that the physician found them when shortly after he left the house.

"What are you doing here, youngsters?" he asked.

"We're half mournin' for Rain-in-the-Face, that's Donald, you know," explained the chief.



They seated themselves in an even row across
the lawn.

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"You had better run home now," answered the physician, "for Donald is a very sick little boy."

"Little Smoke would like t' have us sing 'John Brown's Body Lies a-Moulderin' in th' Grave' as we march away. Do you think that'd make Donald die happy?" asked the chief with an earnest desire to leave nothing undone. "He always liked that song," he concluded.

"Donald is too sick to hear. You must go home and I will watch you until you reach the corner," the physician replied, suspecting this to be at least a part of the tribe of Go-Hawks and not knowing what next their whimsical noddles might contrive.

Sitting Bull rose slowly, the rest reluctantly following and soon the band of "half mourners" had rounded the corner.



CHAPTER IX.



PREPARED FOR THE WORST.

"I WISH 't we could a-sung 'John Brown's Body Lies a-Moulderin'," deplored Little Smoke as the band of "half mourners" filed into the barn and began removing their badges of sorrow.

"It 'd th' word 'grave' in it so seems like it 'd have been most 'propriate," answered Sitting Bull, "an', too, long as Rain-in-the-Face likes it so well as he does."

"What're we goin' t' do with these things?" asked Piggy holding up strips of violet silk.

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“We’d better hide ’em ’way t’ save ’em for some other mournin’ time. A man never knows when he’ll need such things,” responded Sitting Bull, looking round at the group of sober-faced children. “Any of us may have an accident an’ we ought t’ be prepared. I only wish we’d some black, so when Rain-in-the-Face is dead we’d be ready.”

The squaws exchanged meaning glances that boded ill for Aunt Sallie’s black silk petticoat.

“My Aunt Sallie has a black petticoat, but she loves it so much that she wears it ’most all th’ time,” said one.

“An’ our Sunday school teacher told Susie last Sunday that she mustn’t think so much ’bout things t’ wear, but more ’bout bein’ good. P’rhaps it’s that way with auntie an’ if she didn’t have that petticoat she’d

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think more 'bout bein' good," added the other.

"My Sunday school teacher says we ought t' help ev'ry one t' be good as he can," remarked Spotted Wolf.

The chief of the Go-Hawks was much impressed by the success which had attended the efforts of the tribe all the afternoon and it now seemed really necessary to be prepared with something black in case the worst should befall their injured brave. "P'rhaps it's our duty," he said, slowly yielding to temptation and temporizing with his conscience.

"I don't think we'd better ask for it," warned Piggy, whose broad experience with having requests refused made him now struggle to obtain his wishes by some other method more certain of results.

"I think we'd better just s'prise her," suggested Whispering Leaves. "She'll most

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likely wear her white dress to-night, for it's so hot an' when we squaws have gone t' bed an' auntie has gone down stairs then we'll go into her room, take th' petticoat an' throw it out th' window an' you Indians can slip into th' yard an' get it 'n' hide it over here with th' half mournin' bands."

The braves nodded a vigorous approval. They were in favor of any plan suggestive of the war path.

"You Indians must be in Broken Arrow Town by dusk," directed Sitting Bull. "Bring your bows an' arrows, 'cause it may be a bloody night's work. Th' pale faces may fight. Remember it's in a worthy cause. It may help Aunt Sallie be a better lady, an' we may need that black stuff to-morrow t' mourn for Rain-in-the-Face."

The mention of Donald caused the little ones to scatter more soberly to their homes

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than was their wont. The twins, however, talked briskly all the way home, for to them it had indeed been a most momentous afternoon. In their childish way the attempt had been very real and sincere to express their sorrow over a playmate's danger.

"I thought," said Prudence, with pride in her voice, "that we looked perfec'ly stylish as we marched down the street, most as stylish as if it had been a really truly fun'ral."

"I wonder if Donald saw us," mused Patience.

"I hope so, 'cause it'd please him an' oh, Pat, how grand it'll be t' have th' Indians stealin' up to-night. We can watch for 'em an' sit in th' window an' shiver. Oh! I hope father an' auntie won't hear 'em an' go out 'cause they might get killed."

Miss Sallie was dressed in white that evening, just as Prudence had foretold. Plans

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avored the children in every way, for at the dinner table the professor urged his sister to make a neighborhood call with him.

“You’ll not be lonely, will you, dears?” she asked the twins as she consented. “At all events, I want you to be in bed by half-past seven to-night for you have been playing hard all day.”

They consented so readily to going to bed that Miss Sallie remarked to her brother, as they strolled down the street in the gathering twilight, “I hope the children are not ill; I never knew them to be so willing to retire.”

“Ill! nonsense, since they have been playing so much out of doors with the youngsters they are ruddier and stronger than ever.”

Notwithstanding these reassuring words, Miss Sallie pondered over the subject several times during the evening, for she was gaining

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in wisdom as she guided these mischievous little ones from year to year.

As for the twins, they executed a war dance on their bed as the footsteps died away, then stole to Aunt Sallie's room and secured the black silk petticoat. They suffered no pangs of remorse, being convinced that auntie's good demanded the sacrifice. They rolled the petticoat into a small bundle and then stationed themselves in the window to watch for the coming of the warriors.

They shivered delightfully at every sound. When they heard the familiar war-whoop they trembled, and so great was the capacity of Prudence to "make believe" that she said anxiously, "Oh! I hope there'll not be a bloody battle."

One, two, three figures they saw stealing out from the shadows of the trees and creeping stealthily towards the house. Then the squaws

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dropped the bundle from the window and as they jumped back into bed Patience said enthusiastically, "Oh! I'd rather be a squaw than be an angel."

"Yes, an' one kind a-feels like an angel, too, for we've done good work to-night an' if father only knew, he'd be glad that we're helpin' auntie t' be a better lady."

Fortunately for the fate of the petticoat, Donald recovered and the tribe was not compelled to adopt "whole mourning." It was a great comfort to the chief to know, however, that they were prepared for the worst.

"People ought t' be pretty good t' their children," he remarked to Prudence one morning, "or the Lord might think they did not 'preciate 'em an' recall 'em like mother did her invitations last spring."

"I wouldn't be at all s'rprised if He was

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tryin' t' recall Donald for somethin' his mother did," answered Prudence piously.

"I'm glad He changed His mind," continued Jack, "an' I sometimes think we ought to do somethin' t' celebrate Don's gettin' well."

"Do you mean have a party or somethin'?" asked Patience.

"I b'lieve Donald rather have just his intimate 'sociates. You might all come over t' our house. Mother's gone away for a week an' father's 'way all day an' say, it might be nice t' s'rprise Mary by you all stayin' t' dinner."

Thus it came about that every Go-Hawk received a personal invitation to spend the next afternoon at the chief's home. It was so lonely to the little chap without his mother that he thought it must be even more so to the cook and consequently she would be glad

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to have the Go-Hawks to dinner. However, instinct warned him it would be more comfortable to have the affair a surprise.

The afternoon before the party Jack and the twins, by means of a ladder, made their way to the roof of the barn, where they perched beneath the friendly shelter of a huge oak tree and discussed the plans for the following day.

“I’ve been a-thinkin’, girls, it doesn’t seem hardly ’nough t’ have a party an’ play games just like ev’rybody else does, but we ought t’ do somethin’ different. Can’t you think o’ somethin’?”

The girls puckered their brows in anxious thought. They felt deeply the importance of the occasion, that their opinion should be asked rather than that of any of the boys. Ever since their admission into the charmed tribe of Go-Hawks they had blindly followed

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Jack's lead and had never wavered in their devotion. They yearned now to think of a plan which might be acceptable to him, for it seemed wonderful to them that they should be the elect chosen to sit on the roof and make plans with the chief. When they heard two or three shrill whistles in front of the house and realized that Jack did not answer but permitted the boys to walk disconsolately away, while he sat in satisfied silence on the peak of the barn, their souls thrilled with the joy of possession that sent a flush of pride to their eager faces.

"You girls ought t' be able t' think of somethin'. You can always think of things better'n th' kids," encouraged Jack.

"I was just a-thinkin'," began Prudence, "of last winter when one of father's teachers had somethin' happen an' they all went up there an' took him presents. Father talked

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to auntie 'bout it an' said it was such a worthy case that he'd like t' give lots more'n he did."

"Had th' teacher been sick?" asked Jack.

"I can't remember. Seems like his house burned, but anyway I know they took him lots of presents."

"An' we might bring presents t' Donald t' show him we're glad he's well," interrupted the other girl.

Jack's quick imagination pictured Donald loaded with gifts; "what boy wouldn't like a lot?" he asked himself, and then said aloud, "I just knew you girls could think up somethin' better'n th' kids and that's why I invited you up here. We'd better go down now and tell all th' Indians 'bout it so they can hunt up some presents."

As the girls climbed down, Patience said,

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"We ought t' take him somethin' we like, 'cause father said people ought t' be willin' t' give up somethin' they like once in a while."

The day of the party came. Slow little Donald, who usually was tail end when "snap the whip" was played and who never failed to be "it" first when "hide and seek" was the game, was almost overcome by the honors thrust upon him.

The children had selected a small tree on the far end of the lot for the ceremony. Jack and the twins spent the morning tying flags and flowers to its branches. The guests were requested to deposit their gifts at the base of the tree, beneath which a seat was placed for Donald. He was led to it by Jack.

"Ladies an' gentlemen, I'd like t' introduce th' hero of this rememberable occasion, Donald Brown," began the chief. "He's

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been through a war of sickness and comes back t' us with th' marks of battle, for his hair's 'most all come out. It's with great pride that we Indians get together t' ring his weather-beaten hands an' extend our congratulations. These few tokens of 'steem we hope 'll give you pleasure. If the warrior has anything t' say th' audience 'll listen," concluded Jack, who had a somewhat hazy idea that responses were usually made to speeches of welcome.

Under Jack's encouraging eye Donald rose. "I ain't never been in a war, but my hair's all comin' out anyway, 'most as bad as if 'twas shot off. It's nice t' get presents but 'taint my birthday, but I'm glad—but—but—" and then the speaker was interrupted by applause as Jack had directed. The guest of honor was so embarrassed that he sat down suddenly and, as bad luck would

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have it, in his confusion he did not take the seat arranged for him, but sat down on one of his gifts—a berry pie, that was originally intended for dinner at Piggy's home and which the latter had secretly and generously donated to the cause.

This mishap closed the formalities abruptly, since the linen suit worn by the guest of honor was never designed to be decorated with berry pie. "If it'd only had been a pumpkin pie it wouldn't have shown so," he muttered.

"Don't you mind," whispered Patience, "I'll wash it off 'fore dinner."

Such an assortment of gifts! An old dictionary and a top stood side by side with green apples and a banana. Jack had contributed some of his father's dress ties and an old razor. The twins, practical little souls, reasoned that Donald would enjoy having

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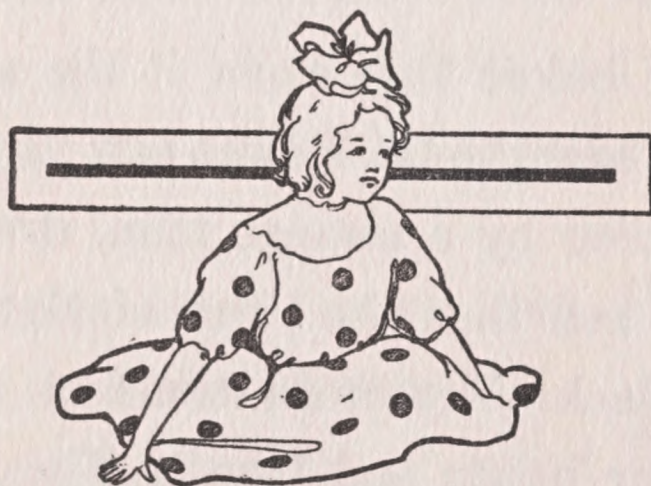
some money for his bank. Encouraged as they so often were by their firm and cherished conviction that if Aunt Sallie and father only knew all about it they would be glad to have them help, they took without hesitation a few pennies from the purse of change which was kept in the kitchen-table drawer for convenience in paying the market man.

Almost before they knew it the afternoon was gone and the Go-Hawks saw Mr. Carroll, accompanied by a strange man, drive up to the door and then the voice of Mary called, "Jack! Jack! You must come at once and wash your hands and face." The members of the tribe looked at Jack and then at each other. He rose beautifully to the occasion.

"Come on, folks, we'd better all wash. Just follow me," he said hospitably, and the youngsters trooped after him towards the

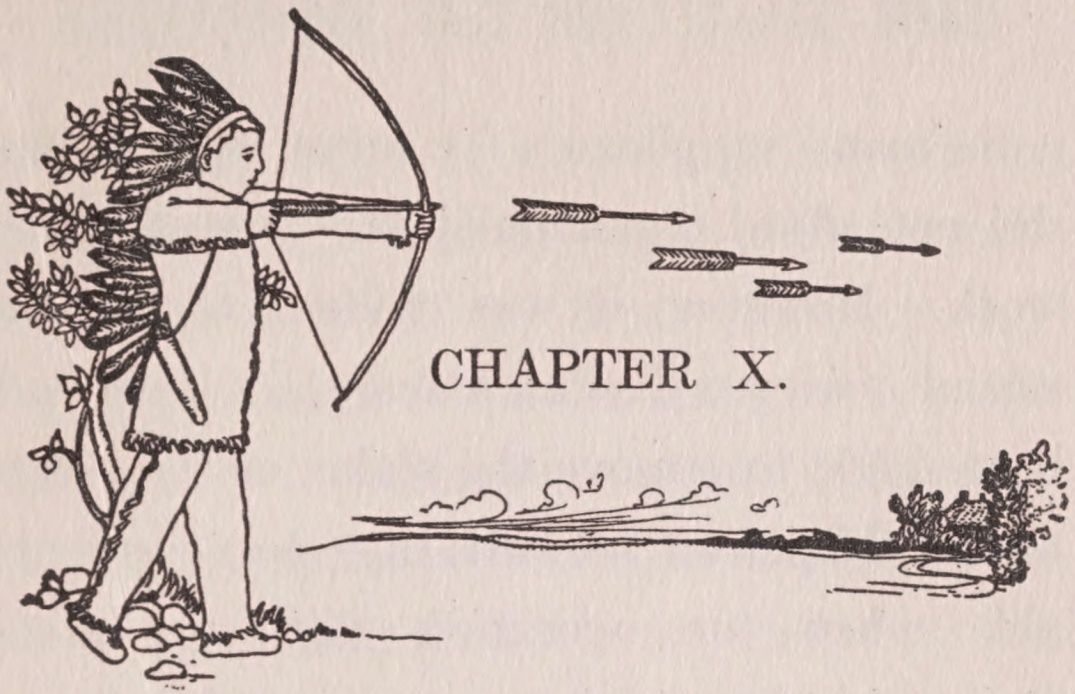
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house. The chief's face was a little more thoughtful than usual, since he chanced to remember just then that he had not thus far spoken to any one about his dinner party.





The youngsters filed quietly upstairs.



CHAPTER X.

SURPRISING THE COOK.

JACK had the presence of mind to usher his guests by the side-door into the house that his father and Mary might not be needlessly disturbed. The youngsters who felt much more at ease in the barn or on the lawn, filed quietly up the stairs, consequently reaching the bath-room unnoticed.

"We'd better wash, just as many of us as can at once, for we haven't much time," said Jack, "an' some of you Indians better take th' tub an' let th' squaws have th' stand first."

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So many supplicants for water at one time did not afford opportunity for very effective work. However, it was evident to even a casual observer that an attempt, at least, had been made to remove the stains of the afternoon. Napoleon seemed the most presentable when the operation was concluded. Patience redeemed her promise and endeavored to remove the marks of the berry pie from Donald's linen suit. In her nervous hurry she used more water than was comfortable.

"I'd 'bout as soon sit in th' pie all th' evenin' as t' be soakin'," he remarked forlornly to the infinite delight of the others.

"We oughter call you 'Squash,'" proposed Piggy.

Mary had announced dinner and still Jack did not make his appearance. Mr. Carroll was annoyed. Prompt and methodical him-

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self he had tried to instill into his son the principles of punctuality and a proper consideration for another's time. A merry ringing laugh floated down the stairs, then a wild scamper and commotion in the bath-room. Mr. Carroll was startled for he had heard the maid call Jack into the house and could not understand the meaning of the noise. As he opened the library door to call his son, a shrill voice cried, "Dare you! dare you! to slide down the stairs, all o' you t' once."

"Who's 'fraid?" was the answer to the challenge and down they came, breathless, laughing, with Jack in their midst.

"Oh, father!" cried Jack enthusiastically, "didn't we do that great? I want t' introduce my Indians t' you."

"In just a moment I shall be delighted, but please come here first," was the quiet reply.

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The lad followed his father into the library. "What is the meaning of this, son? Who are those children and what are they doing here?"

"They're my Indians an' I invited 'em to dinner. I thought, you know, it'd be nice t' s'rprise Mary. You see, father, it's lonesome in this house 'thout mother, an' I felt kind a-sorry for Mary so I thought I'd ask th' Indians all here t' dinner. It's in honor of Donald, too. You don't want me t' tell 'em t' go home after I invited 'em t' come, do you, father?"

"No, if they are here by your invitation I will stand by you. However, do not plan any more surprises during your mother's absence. Run out to the kitchen and tell Mary to put on additional plates and if possible enough for us to eat. I, too, have a guest, so after you have seen Mary bring

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your friends to the study and introduce them."

"I was not aware that my son was giving a party when I invited you to come home for a quiet evening," said Mr. Carroll to his friend. "The boy is hospitable and has invited his entire tribe of Indians to dine with him as a surprise to the cook."

"Do not worry about me," replied the friend; "we have no children and I shall enjoy the experience."

"I have always made it a point to stand by Jack when possible, even when I do not altogether approve of his methods, and that is very often. I never wish to humiliate him before his friends and we settle all points of difference when we are alone. Jack and I are chums, and he and his mother are avowed sweethearts. Yesterday, one of the neighbors asked me, somewhat solicitously I

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thought, when we were going to send Jack away to school, and the question suggested that people in this part of the town will not be sorry when he is old enough to go, for Jack's inventive turn of mind leads him into all sorts of mischief."

The door opened and Jack's sturdy little figure entered, leading the procession. "Father, these are my friends, my Indians, you know. This is Whispering Leaves, Running Water, Spotted Wolf, Rain-in-the-Face an' oh, excuse me, father, I forgot you were pale faces. This is Pat an' Prue an' Napoleon an' Donald, an' Wiggles an' Squint an' Cheese an' Pinky an' Reddy an' Ginger an' Irish an' Fat an' Bones an' Bleary an' last but not least, Piggy Runt."

Mr. Carroll's eyes twinkled as he shook hands with each child. His guest was overtaken with a spasm of coughing, necessitating

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his temporarily leaving the room. Jack's introduction, using the suggestive nicknames of the children, was irresistibly comical to him and he was still smiling when they all entered the dining room.

The dinner proved a success. The soup course was replaced by bowls of bread and milk, the coffee by lemonade and the pie and cheese by cookies and fruit. Upon Jack and the older men fell the burden of conversation, although each of the twins thought of something to say, and Donald from force of habit remarked that he really liked brown bread better than he did white. Fat gazed yearningly at his empty lemonade glass wondering if he dared ask for more. He whispered the longing to Napoleon, who was nursing a similar yearning, and thus encouraged the latter immediately asked Bones to ask Ginger to ask Squint to ask Wiggles to tell Jack that

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Fat wanted some lemonade "awful bad" if there was any.

The result was that all the glasses were re-filled; then Donald wondered if two glasses of lemonade would hurt his milk and Prudence whispered warningly, "Don't be objectioning to things 'cause you're out t' dinner an' it isn't perlite!" At these words Donald braced up and hastily drank his lemonade as though he feared it might be taken from him.

The dinner was over and opinions as to its success were varied. Mary glanced regretfully at the luscious steak that was returned to the ice-chest and vowed if that boy was hers he should receive a good thrashing for "bringing all those dirty younguns into the house. There ain't no sense to it," she said to herself over and over, and declared if she hadn't been there ever since Jack was born that she wouldn't stay another

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hour in the house. "And then to have Jack say that he did it to please me—*me*," she muttered with offended dignity. "Strange ideas some folks have about pleasing. He sha'n't have a single cookie to-morrow." After she visited the bath-room and viewed the finger marks, and towels thrown everywhere, Jack's chances for cookies for several days were indeed slight.

As for the guests, it was the first really fashionable dinner the majority had attended. Their shyness, never very pronounced at other times, led them to make their exit directly after leaving the table. Their comments were many and original as they scampered home in the twilight.

"I wish't folks would give more dinner parties," quoth Piggy, "'cause at other folks' dinners a feller can hev all he wants t' eat an' he can't always at home."

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"It's so perfec'ly stylish t' be out t' dinner, just as if you were grown up. I wanted t' talk more at th' table, but Aunt Sallie said we'd better not say much o' anythin' an' then we'd be sure not t' say anythin' we ought not to," complacently remarked Prudence.

"That lemonade wasn't sweet 'nough," commented Donald.

"You ought'n say anythin' 'bout it if it wasn't, 'cause th' party was in your honor an' it isn't perlite," retorted Patience with much severity.

Napoleon was inclined to walk more haughtily than usual after he had left the other children. It had been the greatest event of his life, and he could scarcely believe that he was returning home from a dinner party given in a beautiful dining room, where he had been the sole representative of his race.

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"I wouldn't be s'rprised if some mornin' I'd wake up jes as white as Jack," he whispered to himself as he entered his cabin home. As for the youthful host, he lingered by request for a brief chat with his father before retiring. "Tell me, son, why did you invite all those children to dine with you, and why did you not ask permission?" inquired the father.

"Well, father, you see, some o' those kids were never invited out to dinner in all their lives. Ginger's awful poor an' so's Squint. They don't even use napkins at their houses. Napoleon never sat down with white people before and they don't even use a table-cloth at their house 'cause there's so many kids an' his mother has t' wash all th' time anyway. I thought it'd be nice t' have 'em all together an' let 'em see how pretty we have ev'rything an' let 'em have all they wanted t' eat."

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"But how did you know they could have all they wanted to eat if no preparations had been made for their visit?"

"Mary always has plenty an' I didn't want t' bother her 'bout it beforehand. It seemed like she'd be happier if she was s'rprised," answered Jack. "I didn't mean t' worry her," continued the boy, "an' you don't care, do you, father? I thought mebbe it'd be better t' have th' dinner party while mother's 'way, 'cause Irish's ears are not always clean an' Ginger has t' go barefoot all summer t' save his shoes for school an' that might make her nervous. But I wouldn't like to leave 'em out, though."

"What about me, Jack? Do you think I enjoy dirty ears and sweaty boys?"

"N—o, but you're a man an' o' course you wouldn't really mind. But you know you an' I have t' take care of mother an' not worry her."

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"You are a funny chap, Jack, and I presume there are many who would say that I do not punish you half enough. But never mind, run along to bed now. However, promise me first, son, that you will not lie awake to-night trying to think of something to do to-morrow, and—you must have no more dinners for a while."

The boy smiled and called back as he started up the stairs, "I wouldn't swap fathers with any other kid in th' whole world."





RETRIBUTION.

"WHAT d' you s'pose has become of the squaws?" asked Jack of Donald a few days after the dinner. "I haven't seen 'em anywhere an' I've walked past their house a lot o' times."

"I don't know," replied Donald, "'less they both have th' mumps an' then o' course they wouldn't want t' show their faces."

All misfortunes at this time were associated in the speaker's mind with illness. Both boys were stretched full length on the grass, their caps pulled down to shade their eyes.

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“Well, one thing sure pop, they’d never go back on the Go-Hawks. We’ve never been sorry we let ’em in, for they’ve always obeyed orders an’ done what we told ’em to an’ if they’re in any trouble now I’m goin’ t’ help ’em out. It’s our bus’ness to protect ’em ’cause they’re our squaws.”

Donald studied in silence and then said slowly, “I wish ’t they weren’t twins—that’s my objection to ’em. It makes ’em look too much alike all th’ time.”

“You always find somethin’ th’ matter, Don. I s’pose if you had died an’ gone to Heaven you’d have found somethin’ th’ matter there. Don’t you ever feel like everythin’ is all right an’ laugh just ’cause you’re glad?”

“But what’d I laugh at? There’s no fun laughin’ ’cept you’ve somethin’ t’ laugh ’bout.”

“I like you, Don, even if you are queer

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and fussy, and p'rhaps you'll outgrow kickin' 'bout everythin'. I once knew a girl and they said she was outgrowin' fits an' that's worse than what you've got, so don't worry. Let's get somethin' t' eat. I'm hungry."

* * * * *

The Trevellyn home had not been a cheerful place the past few days. Miss Sallie was dressing one afternoon when callers came. She wished her violet tea jacket. She searched hastily, finding no trace of it, and was the more puzzled since the day before she had the same experience with her black silk petticoat. She knew positively that she had hung it on its accustomed hook in her closet and yet it seemed to have disappeared, mysteriously, absolutely. The violet tea jacket had apparently met the same fate. Late in the afternoon she searched again in vain and then called to the twins, who were

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playing in their room. "Children, have either of you seen my tea jacket?"

There was a significant silence from the next room. "Children, do you hear me?" she called.

"What 'll we do? What 'll we do? What-e-v-e-r'll we do?" whispered the girls excitedly. Then a voice answered haltingly, "We haven't seen it so very lately, auntie."

Miss Sallie grew suspicious of the drawling words. She had not had the care of the twins all these years without learning many things, one being that they usually knew something about everything that went wrong.

"Children, come to me, please," she called in a gentle voice. When the children obeyed with faltering steps and stood before her, first on one foot and then on the other, their faces flushed and hands clutching wildly at their apron strings, her practiced eye read

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the knowledge of at least one of the missing garments.

"When did you say you last saw the tea jacket?" she questioned, looking keenly into the flushed faces.

"Oh, it must 've been last month," answered one with a brave show of indifference.

"Where was it then?"

There was a long and portentous silence while the twins felt a wild desire to flee from threatened danger.

"Was it in the closet at that time?" asked Aunt Sallie.

"It was first, auntie," replied one slowly; "yes, it was, for I remember seeing it there myself," she concluded glibly.

"Then when did you last see it?"

"The very last time, auntie? It's kind o' hard t' remember," replied Prudence.

"Auntie feels positive that if you try very

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hard you can remember just where you saw it last. You must do it."

"Well, then, I s'spect th' very last time was down in front o' Donald's when it marched away," was the peculiar response given in a tone that implied that Prudence considered the discussion ended.

Miss Sallie looked puzzled. "I do not understand, children. How could my tea jacket march away from Donalds'? He was very ill at that time."

"Are you goin' t' church next Sunday, auntie?" queried Patience hopefully. "We would like t' go with you."

"Auntie has asked you a question, children, and you must answer."

The twins looked at each other despairingly, for Aunt Sallie seemed to have such a bad habit of persisting. "You must tell either your father or me what you know

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about the jacket. I am convinced that you do know something."

"What's 'convinced,' auntie, please?" interrupted Prudence, suddenly thirsting for knowledge.

"It means that I am very sure you know where my tea jacket is and that you must tell," replied Aunt Sallie, ignoring the opportunity thus given to forget the question at hand.

There was another long pause and then she said firmly, "I am waiting."

The children sighed. "If you must know, I s'pose we must tell," then said Patience. "It was a most worthy cause though."

Then bravely spoke Prudence, "I'll tell, 'cause I did it. You see, auntie, Donald wasn't more'n half dead an' th' undertaker told Jack 'n' me that people wore violet for half mournin' an' black for whole. We were

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'fraid Donald'd be clear dead by mornin' an' I didn't want t' cut up your black silk petticoat, so we thought we'd better get in on the half mournin', an' you were at a party so we couldn't ask 'bout it an' I thought most prob'bly you wouldn't mind, so we cut up your tea jacket, 'cause it was just th' right color."

"Yes," said auntie quietly, but with a peculiar expression on her face, "then what did you do?"

"Then we went an' mourned all in a row in front o' Donald's an' truly honest, cross—m'—heart—an' hope—t'—die, if it isn't true but that was th' very last time we saw your jacket. I shouldn't be s'rprised, auntie, if that helped Donald get well an' you're glad 'bout it, aren't you?"

"Very," was the reply. "Then what did you do with my black petticoat?"

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The children looked surprised for they had forgotten for the moment about the petticoat. However, they did not worry since auntie seemed to accept the fate of her jacket so calmly.

"Oh, I can tell you all 'bout th' petticoat," answered Prudence, who was generally ready with a response to all questions. "You see, we thought we'd better have some black stuff so if we had t' whole mourn we'd be ready an' so we took your petticoat."

"Perhaps I needed to lose my clothes to be disciplined," mused Aunt Sallie.

"What's disciplined?" asked Patience.

"I'll not stop to explain now, but you may understand later. You may return to your room and you must not leave the yard this week."

The next morning a little change was missed from the market purse which Miss

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Sallie knew she had left there. She then invaded her brother's study, with a determined expression on her usually placid face. "Philip, the time has come when you must put aside your books and attend to your children," she said soberly.

Professor Trevellyn looked at the speaker wonderingly. "What is the trouble, Sallie?" It has been such a long time since you have complained to me that I was hopeful they were doing better."

"I dislike to disturb you, Philip, for I know how absorbed you are in the book you are writing, but I feel it is now necessary."

She then told her brother how the children had gone into half mourning for their playmate by means of her beautiful silk jacket and of their taking her black petticoat that they might be prepared for his death. "The

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most serious feature to me is that they seem to be unconscious that they have done anything very wrong. This morning I find gone a little change which I left in the kitchen purse."

The professor's face grew very grave. "This is serious, Sallie. I cannot bear to think my children would take even a penny which did not belong to them."

"They would not consider it stealing," she answered. "If they are responsible for the disappearance of the money we will find that they have taken it for some 'worthy cause' as they are fond of saying. I want you to talk with them and I will send them to you at once."

"What d' you s'pose 'll happen now?" asked Prudence of her sister as they went down stairs a few minutes later.

"Father hardly ever sends for us 'less he

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doesn't like somethin' we've done 'cause he's always so busy with his bugs an' beetles," replied Patience.

Then they reached the study. "Do you want t' speak t' us, father?" ventured one.

"I am sorry about this, children," he answered gravely as he placed an arm around each as she stood timidly at his side. "I hope with all my heart that auntie has made a mistake this time, little ones, for I am sure that you would not want to grieve father," he began as though ashamed of the words he must speak. "It is just this way. You remember you took auntie's tea jacket and then her petticoat without asking her permission and now that she can't find a little of the money she left in the kitchen purse, she is afraid that—well—that perhaps you have borrowed it and neglected to return it. I do not believe

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that you did take it, did you?" questioned the father gently.

The children looked at each other in dismay. They had been so positive that both father and auntie would be glad to have them remember Donald that they had neglected to mention to them their happy inspiration to give him some money.

As he looked into their faces Professor Trevellyn's heart sank. "Please tell father just how it happened," he said.

Then they told the story of the missing articles, one child supplementing another until it was all out.

Long and gravely the father talked to his children trying to make them understand the difference between right and wrong.

"Well, I'll tell you what we can do," finally said Patience, "we can bring auntie's skirt back. Donald is well now an' we won't have

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t' mourn, an' we can ask him t' give th' money back."

"You may bring auntie's petticoat home, but you will have to earn somehow the money to repay that which you took and to buy auntie a new tea jacket."

The twins looked at each other aghast. "But how, father, how can we earn money? What can we do? Can't you give us some work? Can't we catch bugs for you?" asked one.

"I can catch lots of bugs, I know," asserted the other.

The father studied a moment. He then said, "I will pay you for all the weeds you dig out of the yard and there are plenty to dig, I assure you."

"Auntie said we couldn't go out of the yard all week so we might as well begin now," suggested Patience, who was some-

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what nervous under the serious eyes of her father. She felt the need of fresh air after the excitement of the last half hour.

This state of affairs explains why Jack found the girls digging weeds that afternoon out in the side yard. They rested as they told him the story of the past few days.

"I hate t' have you girls diggin' old weeds in th' sun, anyway it was t' my party you brought that money an' for one of our Indians we cut up that jacket. I'm goin' to think of some other way t' earn money an' we'll help you."

"Oh, Jack, will you?" asked Prudence hopefully. "My back's most broke diggin' weeds an' it isn't very nice work. There isn't anythin' 'bout weeds but dirt."

"I guess I'll go down to th' river an' think it out," announced the chief of the Go-Hawks, "an' don't you worry, girls, I'll stick by you."

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The girls gazed at his retreating figure. "I just love Jack," said Patience with the easy candor of extreme youth. "He always helps you out."

"Yes, he does," answered the sister. "Aunt Sallie says she'd rather we'd play with girls, but I like boys better, 'cause what girl'd ever think of tyin' strings t' our toes an' hang a long end out o' th' window for 'em t' pull Fourth of July so we could get up early, an' th' Go-Hawks did that an' we got up at four o'clock."

"I s'pose we might as well go t' work with th' weeds while we wait for Jack," said Prudence. "I'm goin' t' play I'm a pris'ner an' auntie's a jailor an' th' house is a jail. 'Tisn't half so hard to do things if you play you're somethin' else while you are doin' 'em," said the child eagerly.

"I'll play it, too," answered Patience.

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“Then get t’ work, pris’ner, an’ th’ harder we work th’ sooner we’ll get out o’ jail.”

The children fell to work vigorously. Aunt Sallie smiled as she glanced from the window and wondered if they were learning the meaning of the word “discipline.”





The boy lying on the river bank whistled
softly to himself.



CHAPTER XII.

THE DAWNING OF ENTERPRISE.

THE boy lying on the river bank whistled softly to himself as he gazed at the blue skies and overhanging trees as if for inspiration. Occasionally he picked up a stone and tossed it out over the water. "I hate t' have 'em keep a store or a lemonade stand or sell flowers or dig weeds," he mused. "Seems like I ought t' think o' somethin' else; anybody can do those things an' our squaws ought t' do somethin' different."

A sudden gust of wind brought to his feet a

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piece of old newspaper. At first his eyes rested on it indifferently and then his face brightened. "I know lots o' folks 'll take it."

Jack ran back to the Trevellyn home and called excitedly to the twins: "I have it, girls, we'll make th' money by startin' a newspaper. Then we'll buy auntie a tea jacket, pay back th' money you took for Donald an' if we have any left do somethin' fine with it." He paused breathless.

"Jack, do you s'pose we could make 'nough money t' take all th' Go-Hawks t' th' circus?" asked Prudence, her eyes round with wonder.

"I don't know, o' course, but I think so—"

Father says a man can do anything he makes up his mind to," interrupted Patience, "so I s'pose if we want t' do these things we can."

"Anyway we'll pay what you owe," answered Jack.

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"It'll be perfec'ly stylish t' own a newspaper just as if we're grown up," began Prudence, "but how 'll we print it?"

"Don't need t' print it. Donald writes th' best o' any o' us. He can copy 'em all."

The twins gazed in awe at the chief whose plans were always so wonderful.

"I know a man who owns a newspaper an' I guess I'll go an' ask his advice," said Jack who was a firm believer in applying to headquarters for information. "To-morrow I'll come over an' we'll start t' work."

The editor was very busy when Jack sought him in his private office a half hour later. He had a liking for the lad who had furnished material for many a comic paragraph, so he glanced up smilingly as he held out his hand. "Good evening, Jack, anything new in politics among the Go-Hawks?"

"Things 've been pretty quiet, sir, but we,

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at least some of us, are needing to earn some money an' I thought we'd better start a newspaper. I'd like a little advice from you."

"So you think that would be an easy way to make money?"

"I know it'd be easier than diggin' weeds, an' it ought t' be more improvin'."

"I admit that certainly. What kind of a paper are you going to start? Is it to be religious, sporting or literary?"

"Oh, just a newspaper like yours that ev'ry one wants t' read."

"Will you be the editor?"

"I s'pose so," answered the boy modestly.

"Let me see. You must have an editor, a business manager and a printer. I presume you will have some of the Go-Hawks deliver your papers."

"What'd you have in it t' read?" was the next question.

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"What had you thought of in that line?" asked the editor with a twinkle in his eyes.

"Well, you see, I only thought 'bout havin' the paper a few minutes ago, but I think we ought t' have an editorial. That is somethin' like a composition, isn't it?"

"Something, yes," was the answer.

"Th' girls can make some poetry an' we can have somethin' 'bout th' people in the neighborhood an' losts an' founds an' things. The girls are good at thinkin' up things. Would that be enough for five cents?"

"Yes, that would do, and here is a quarter to pay for my subscription for five weeks. If I can help you in any way you must call on me. Here is a bunch of paper for you. I suppose you'll write the paper for a while."

"That's what we thought. When I'm a man I'm goin' t' be as nice t' boys as you

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are,” replied Jack as he shook hands and with a roll of paper left the office.

“I’m goin’ t’ get a lot o’ subscribers t’-night an’ s’prise th’ girls,” he resolved, for Jack loved to awe the twins. He toiled patiently all the evening, thoroughly canvassing the neighborhood. He pictured the paper in such glowing colors that almost every one he approached subscribed for it. The boy collected in advance and his heart was light when he reached home and counted the results of his evening’s work. Early the next morning he was at the Trevellyn home.

“I’ll write th’ editorial on somethin’ solid like—”

“Like brick?” asked Donald.

“Yes, that’d do—an’ you girls must each write a poem and lots o’ funny things ’bout people an’ advertisements. Donald can copy it all and Piggy an’ Napoleon take ’em ’round

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when we're ready. We'll have t' work hard 'cause I promised th' first paper next week."

When Professor Trevellyn returned home that evening he found the corner of his house decorated with a sign that read: "Office of the Sun Beem. Editors—Jack Carroll, Pat and Prue Trevellyn. Busness Manager, Piggy Runt. Printer, Donald Clarey. Newsboy, Napoleon Bonaparte. Call Within."

"Sallie, did you know that this is the office of the 'Sun Beam,' a new publication edited by your nieces?" he asked his sister. She had not discovered the fact and only knew that the children had played quietly with paper and pencils all day on the lawn. He then told her of his conversation with one of his daughters who had assured him that they were going to earn sufficient money to buy Aunt Sallie a new tea jacket and replace the pennies they had taken.

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The first issue of the "Sun Beam" was awaited with interest. It was somewhat delayed because Donald could not write fast and the twins had hard work to find words that would rhyme. At last it was ready and copies were delivered by Napoleon and Piggy, who occasioned much merriment as they ran from house to house shouting "Here's yer Sun Beams."

"Let's read it all over together," said Jack to the twins. Glowing with the pride of first authorship they consented happily.

The first page was occupied by Jack's editorial; he had ignored Donald's suggestion to write on the inspiring topic of "Bricks" and instead wrote the following on "General Grant's Statue."

"There stands the man on horseback. He has a soard hanging down at his side. The statue is of General Grant and is in

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Lincoln Park in Chicago. When General Grant died on a brite day in July all Chicago knew it and was in moarnin' before noon. He was one of our gratest generals."

The poems were given a place of honor following the editorial. Patience chose for her subject something with which she was familiar as follows:

MY LITTLE DOG.

I know the deerest doggey,
He lives not far away,
He often comes to see me
And oft with him I play.

He sits at the window
And barks at passursbye,
He is as cute as cute can be
And never makes me cry.

He is the deerest doggey,
In all the world to hold,
I now must end my poem
For it is getting cold.

P' T'

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As Patience had selected the dog, Prudence concluded to honor the family cat.

MY KITTY.

She has the britest eyes,
She runs in and out
Trying to catch flies.
She has a little white spot
Under her chin,
Around the house she does trot
Down into the corn bin.

She likes to run about
And see what she can see,
I never can pout
When shes with me.

She is a cuning kitten
As cuning as can be
She ran off with my mitton
But shes the cat for me.

P' T'

A society column contributed by Patience in the first issue was very 'newsy.'

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"The new house on the corner is being plastured upstares.

The boy who drives the groacery wagon told Donald there would be a cirkus next week.

One of Clareys cows got in our front yard and stepped on Aunt Sallies panseys last weak. It made her mad.

Jacks pony ran into a barbwire fence and they had to have a horse doctor. He got well. The pony I mean.

Napoleons mother has a sore hand, but she hopes to be able to wash soon.

Mr. Smiths hired man Sam by name says when the folks go away he will give a riding party. He says he will send out the invitations in time to be put in next weaks paper.

A funeral went by Piggys house yesterday. but I cant put much about it in the paper for

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we did not know who was in the coffin. It might have been a lady and it might have been a man."

ADVERTISEMENTS.

"The best boots and shoes can be found in the barn at Slims.

For Rent—A tooth brush. Call on Bleary 799 Molasses street.

For Sale—A spool of thread. Call on Miss Feathery Furch Chickenyard on Maple shuger street.

For Rent—A half pound of bugs. Call on Father he has plenty at 13 Fried Potato street.

For Sale—A grasshopper. By Mr. Beet Peach who is visiting Miss Patience Trevellyn.

The paper had a wide circulation for so new a publication. The chief of the Go-Hawks and his warriors were proud. They

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restored the pennies taken from the kitchen purse. The remainder of the money they took to the nearest dry goods store. "Can we get 'nough vi'let silk with this money t' make a tea jacket?" asked Jack.

"Who is it for and how big is she?" asked the clerk.

"Miss Trevellyn, my aunt," responded Prudence. "She's 'bout as big as that girl over there sellin' thread."

The clerk pulled down a roll of violet silko-line. "You can get enough of this and have some money left to buy peanuts on your way home," he suggested, and the Go-Hawks were delighted.

"I am proud of you children," said Professor Trevellyn, when they went into his study for their goodnight kiss. "Father knew you would be glad to earn the money and would understand how it was."

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The twins looked at each other approvingly. They enjoyed the praise. It was not often they received any.

"When we're big girls we'll keep house for you always, father, an' you may have apple pie for ev'ry meal," said Patience.

"Yes, you shall an' I'll make 'em myself an' put lots o' apples in ev'ry pie an' lots o' sugar on th' top," added Prudence as she threw her arms about her father's neck.

"Don't you love us more'n you do your bugs?" she asked.

Professor Trevellyn laughed. "Father loves his children better than anything in the world and he wants nothing so much as to see you grow more and more like your mother, for—"

"Oh, tell us 'bout her 'gain—please—please, father," and the twins crept into his arms. The old-fashioned chair held them all and the

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father's voice grew tender as he told them of their mother.

It was thus Aunt Sallie found them when she came in search of the girls. She looked at the trio and then softly closed the door and stole away, leaving them alone in the twilight.





CHAPTER XIII.

A NEW FIELD OF ACTIVITY.

PIGGY RUNT'S older sister, Clara-Maude, who was not quite sixteen years of age, had shown interest for the first time in the wiles of the other sex, and was struggling against fearful odds to enjoy the experience. Her "beau," as Piggy called him, was two years her senior and was collector for a local firm. Moreover, it must be stated that this was not his first affair of the heart. Whenever by accident he chanced to meet Clara-Maude on the street he would accompany her

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home, and one evening he went to see her.

When the call was repeated a few evenings later, her parents thought that it was time for them to interfere, that she was entirely too young to entertain callers, and informed her of their decision so positively that they never doubted the result. When the conversation was repeated by Clara-Maude to her beau, the youth replied scornfully, "Oh, very well, I would not think of forcing my company on your father and mother if it is not wanted, but you can send me a note by your brother every time they are going out and I will come up."

This seemed so brave and romantic to Clara-Maude that she consented, and from that time began what bade fair to be the making of Piggy's fortune. "I'll give you five cents to carry a note down to George and not tell," quoth the sister a few days later.

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"Let's see yer nickel," he responded in his most business-like manner. When the money was in his grimy hand he stole away. The note was safely delivered and the messenger inquired, "Do you want to say anything back?"

"Yes, I do, kid, wait a minute," was the reply.

"It'll cost you a nickel t' get this t' her an' it's cheap at that. Got th' stuff?" asked Piggy, thinking joyously of the pop he meant to purchase on his way home.

"I'll tell you what, kid," began George persuasively, "if you stick by Clara-Maude and me and help us out, you'll get a chance to earn a lot of nickels. Is it a bargain?"

Nickels satisfied Piggy for the first week and the notes flew back and forth thick and fast. Piggy's ever hungry stomach received a daily tribute of sweetmeats. His cunning

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was so great that he was able to carry two notes each way without detection and his money-making instincts developed rapidly. He became more and more devoted to Clara-Maude and her "beau," somewhat deserting the Go-Hawks in consequence.

Prayer-meeting nights seemed designed for surreptitious calls, which, for greater safety, were made in the library, where the side door might be used if necessity demanded a quick exit. Piggy never failed to be on hand, his freckled face wreathed in philanthropic smiles. While the young couple fully appreciated the service of the boy, their relations with him were purely of a business character and they did not yearn for his society on Wednesday nights. They bore with it cheerfully for one evening and the next week asked Piggy how much he would take to retire.

The lad studied for a moment and replied,

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"It's so pesky hot an' I ain't a bit sleepy so I guess th' job's worth a quarter."

"Here's your quarter," responded the vexed "beau" with alacrity, "now hop, for I can only stay till nine o'clock."

"Well, if this beau bus'ness ain't th' funniest bus'ness I ever saw," mused Piggy as he tumbled into bed. "Beaux must be somethin' like gold mines an' it wouldn't make me mad if sis' had ten." He took the quarter to bed with him and the next morning tied it in a piece of rag and hid it inside his shirt. Only on his birthday had he ever boasted of a quarter and he liked to feel it near him. Inasmuch as he had a chance to earn a dime that day, the quarter and Piggy had not parted company that afternoon, when he joined the twins, Jack, Donald and Napoleon, who had gathered on the Carroll lawn.

"Where've you been so long, Piggy? Seems

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like you've been gone 'way somewhere," said Jack.

"I'm in bus'ness an' when a feller's workin' he don't have much time for loafin'. I've got a steady job."

The children looked at Piggy in amazement. However, it was with a feeling of fellowship, for had they not been recently in the newspaper business and did they not know the joy of labor and its compensation?

"Who you a-workin' for?" asked Napoleon.

"My sister'n her beau. Oh gee! It's great! All I have t' do is t' carry notes ev'ry day an' sometimes watch at nights in th' hall—get ten cents a job for that, an' he pays me a quarter t' go t' bed."

"Watch for what? Burglars?" asked Patience.

"I don't know for what I'm watchin'. Not t' watch them, I s'pose."

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"Do you think there'd be enough work fer any o' th' rest o' us?" asked Napoleon wistfully.

Piggy looked doubtful. While he was ready to boast of his work he was not ready to share it. His love for sweetmeats and pop was too pronounced for that.

"Do you s'pose when your sister's through with this beau she'll get 'nother?" asked Jack, with an eye toward the future.

"I dunno. 'This is her first one an' Ma's awful mad 'bout him an' that's why he wants t' come when they're not at home. Beaux're awful rich," asserted Piggy.

"I guess some beaux own banks an' can take all th' money they want," ventured Prudence.

"I allers thought beaux were kind o' squashy myself. The girl who lives next door t' us has a lot," declared Donald.

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Jack had been silent during these comments. If there was any good for one he always wished all the Go-Hawks to share it. "Piggy, if that beau pays you t' go t' bed, don't you s'pose he'd pay all o' us somethin' if we just happened t' be in th' library when he comes t' see Clara-Maude?"

"I s'pose he would, for beaux like t' be 'lone," replied Piggy, a trifle reluctantly.

"I tell you! We'll send him a warnin' tellin' him t' bring a pocketful o' money Wednesday night or he may be met in a dark alley an' scalped," suggested the chief of the Go-Hawks.

"Then let's say that," said Napoleon.

"It'd scare him a lot worse if you said you're goin' t' scalp my sister," interrupted Piggy, who had grown worldly wise.

"All right! I'll print the warnin' in red paint an' Napoleon can take it down to-

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morrow. You must look fierce when you hand it t' him, kid."

"Oh, let's wear war paint an' feathers an' just as soon as Piggy's folks go t' prayer meetin' we'll slip in th' side door an' hide in th' library, only I s'pose Napoleon'll fall over somethin' an' make a racket an' we'll get caught," said Donald.

"Won't neither, an' I guess if I carry th' warnin' I oughter hev a chance at th' beau," retorted the accused.

"Yes, Napoleon's got t' be there," interrupted Jack, "but somehow I'm not so sure 'bout the squaws. If 'twasn't at Piggy's house where he has a kid sister it'd be different. She won't dare t' interfere with us warriors, but she might try t' talk t' th' squaws."

"Oh—Jack! It'll be so excitin'," mourned Patience.

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"I know, an' yet it may be a bloody night's work. We might have t' kill that beau. One never knows what'll happen when Indians are on th' war path, but we'll share 'll th' plunder with you, an' if this night's work is successful there 'll be lots more work where you can help," concluded the chief consolingly.

The twins were disappointed, but they never questioned Jack's decision, and as they parted from the boys Prudence said, "We'll pray for you to-night."

* * * * *

"Are you Clara-Maude's beau?" asked Napoleon the following morning as he approached the victim.

The "beau's" face turned a shade redder as he replied haughtily, "Well, I can't see that it's anything to you if I am."

"If yer are, take this warnin', read it, degest it an' if yer don't mind what it says,

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yer a-goin t' hev trouble," thundered Napoleon.

"Who's going to make me trouble? You?"

"You wait an' see. I'm off."

The note was opened and read as follows:

"Warning to Clara Maudes bow!!! To save your life and your girls scalpe you had better bring a pockit full of mony tonight when you go to see her. If you dont you will be sorry for there will be blood to pay before the rise of another sun. A frend warnes you!"

The "beau" was not at all frightened and was even brave enough to laugh good-naturally, for he was positive the note was from Piggy. So he started forth to make his prayer-meeting-night call with his pocket well filled with pennies and small change.

Meanwhile Jack, Donald and Napoleon had managed to secrete themselves in the

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library. Piggy planted himself firmly in plain sight. There seemed no need for him to hide.

"You here, Piggy, thought maybe you would be in bed by this time," remarked the beau genially.

"I think you are just horrid to hang around this way every week," added the big sister.

"You'd think I was horrid if I was t' tell on you," began Piggy defensively.

"Here's your quarter if you go to bed right away and stay there," interrupted the beau.

"It's worth more'n a quarter t' go t' bed when a feller don't want to, but you're such a reg'lar customer that I will for you," was the magnanimous reply, and, taking the quarter, the martyr tramped cheerfully off to bed to dream of sweetmeats on the morrow.

Alas for fond hopes of peace! Piggy had no sooner disappeared than from out the

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shadows behind the door stole a swarthy-cheeked young Indian. "I came t' sit with you all th' evenin'," he remarked as he took a seat on the piano stool.

"Indeed, and who are you and what will you take to encourage you to sit somewhere else?" asked the beau.

"I—I'm goin' t' be a helper to beaux an' I'll leave you in peace if you'll pay my price."

"What's your price?"

"Only fifteen cents if you pay cash down."

"I am inclined to believe your absence is worth fifteen cents," replied the afflicted beau.

The chief of the Go-Hawks took the money and replied courteously, "I hope you'll have a nice time an' that I can do some more work for you. Good-night!"

As soon as the chief took his departure and before the young couple had time to recover

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from their astonishment, forth crawled Donald from under the sofa. "I'm all stiff from sittin' under that sofa, so I guess I'll sit th' rest of th' evenin' on th' couch with you an' walk home with you," he began in his sweetest tones.

"I guess not," replied the beau, putting his hand in his pocket. "It is surely a good thing I was warned. Here are some pennies for you. Take them and go, and if there are any more of you Indians hiding around here I'd rather you'd all come out at once, for it is getting late," urged the persecuted one with a reassuring smile at his wrathful sweetheart.

"I guess there's only me left," said a small voice, and from behind the leather chair swaggered Napoleon. "Yer money or yer life or me fer all th' evenin'. Take yer choice, Mr. Beau, 'n' be quick 'bout it," he muttered, trembling meanwhile as he heard Jack and

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Donald departing, realizing that he was the last of the Go-Hawks to do the "bloody night's work."

"Oh, if it is a choice for my life, money or you, I prefer my life, so here is some money, and now clear out and I will settle you kids another time."

Napoleon was not slow to follow directions and immediately joined his companions, who had waited for him at the corner.

"My eyes! But they were frightened," said Donald. "I'm kind a-glad we didn't have t' hurt anybody."

"So'm I," responded Jack, "but it was a great night's work. I say, I b'lieve there can be good bus'ness done a-helpin' beaux 'long, doin' errands for 'em an' then leavin' 'em 'lone 'stead of stayin' with 'em."

"How'd we get all th' beaux?" asked Donald.

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"Oh, we'd have t' hunt 'em up, same as any other bus'ness," answered Jack.

"I'm 'fraid all th' Go-Hawks'd make too many t' do it," said Donald.

"Then we might have just us three, Pat, Prue an' Piggy 'cause he gave us th' idea an' we'll call ourselves 'Beau Runters.' 'Runters' is in honor o' Piggy. We'll have an office in our barn an' I think we can get a lot o' bus'ness."

"We might think it all over to-night an' in th' mornin' we'll get th' squaws an' plan it all out," suggested Donald.

The other two assented and the three senior members of the newly organized "Beau Runters" separated at the corner, each youngster holding fast to his money and congratulating himself on the evening's work.



THE BEAU RUNTER AGENCY.

AT an early hour the following morning the six "Beau Runters" met to discuss their campaign. Jack, with characteristic energy, had swept a corner of the barn-loft and there established the office of the new agency which was destined to create such a ripple of fun the coming fortnight in the town, and ever after to occupy a unique place in its history.

In imagination each boy had spent many times the money he had earned the night before. In truth, Napoleon had assisted in purchasing the supplies which had furnished

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a breakfast for his mammy and her flock of pickaninnies.

"It must 've felt grand t' sit in th' library an' wait for th' beau and his girl t' come," wistfully remarked Patience.

"We prayed for you, that th' Lor'd spare you all if th' battle was fierce," said Prudence, who was a regular attendant at Sunday school and prone to invoke the divine blessing at all times.

"I'd my bow an' arrow ready t' shoot at th' first show of trouble, an' yet I hoped we'd have no battle 'cause Piggy's earnin' his livin' off 'em," answered the peaceably inclined chief of the Go-Hawks.

"I was just a-thinkin'," remarked Piggy, "if we're goin' t' have a reg'lar agency t' look after beaux an' their girls you kids had orter get yer own, 'cause I can take care o' this one. I didn't care course, 'cause you learned

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how off him last night, but you kids had orter keep yer mitts off him now."

"That's so," answered Jack, "well, let's see, Don, you said th' girl who lives next door t' you had a lot, an' th' girl who lives down on this corner has a beau who comes ev'ry Sunday night an'—"

"An' my Sunday school teacher has a beau, 'cause he comes t' walk home with her from Sunday school," interrupted Prudence.

"That's good, — that'll give us a beau apiece to start with," said Jack.

"Father said ev'rybody ought t' be bus'ness-like," chimed in one of the squaws, who was inclined to quote her father on all occasions.

"Then we'd better print bus'ness cards t' use," said Jack, who had thoughtfully provided the office with some of his mother's

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monogram stationery. He now took a sheet and printed:

BOW RUNTER AGENCY
Pawnee Dirt Lodge
Broken Arrow Town
WILL HELP ALL GIRLS OUT
WITH BOWS CHEEP
Special Rates Summer Nights

"How's that?" asked the author, holding up the card for inspection.

"That's great," said one.

"Let's print 'em right away an' get t' workin'," urged Napoleon, who yearned to make enough that he might have some hopes of a treat.

The suggestion was adopted; by noon the cards were printed, and the agents instructed to start work that afternoon. The available beaux were apportioned out.

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"You must go up t' each an' introduce yboursef," instructed Jack. "Tell 'em you b'long t' th' 'Beau Runter Agency' an' that we deal only in high class beaux. Then ask if they have any errands t' run or notes t' carry t' their girls. If they say they haven't any then tell 'em you'll call ev'ry day an' you'll 'preciate it if they'll save all their work for you. Then go t' their girl an' do just th' same thing."

"An' I'll tell you a good way," interrupted Piggy Runt, who now that his own rights were to be respected was generous enough to offer helpful hints. Who was better versed than he in the art of persecuting beaux,—for had he not enjoyed several weeks' experience? "When you see a beau an' his girl on th' street," said Piggy, "walk right 'long 'side 'em an' sure as shootin' th' beau'll pay you t' go 'way. If th' girl is sittin' on th' front

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steps with her beau just walk up an' sit down 'side 'em an' say you've come t' stay all th' evenin'—an' most likely you'll get some money if you promise t' go home."

"That's a great scheme, Piggy, an' it's peachy of you t' tell us," cried Jack. "I don't b'lieve there's ever been anybody in th' beau bus'ness an' we ought t' make money."

"Don't you think we'd better not tell anybody 'bout it, only th' beaux an' their girls, 'cause other folks mighten understand an' we don't want our bus'ness spoiled until we've had a chance t' make some money," warned Donald.

"One week I made a dollar," boasted Piggy.

"A dollar!" gasped Napoleon. "Mebbe if I work as hard as I kin I kin make 'nough money t' buy some new pants by th' time school opens."

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Jack looked keenly at Napoleon and vowed that he should have the best beau of the whole lot. "I tell you, kid, s'pose you take that laughy fellow in th' shoe store—he goes with th' girl on our corner an' she laughs a lot, too."

"Mebbe they're a-laughin' too much," chimed in Donald.

Napoleon gladly assented, and so great was his zeal to please that he even washed his hands and face before starting forth a few hours later. He concluded it would be a waste of time to minister unto his feet the same attention. "They'd get all dirty goin' down," he muttered apologetically.

He located his "beau" without difficulty and was much encouraged to find him smiling as Jack had foretold. "Here's my card," he began bashfully, as he fished from his pocket a soiled piece of pasteboard. "I want t' go t' work for you an' your girl."

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"You do, do you?" and the "beau" laughed heartily as he viewed the little chap, whose face was upturned to his so anxiously.

"I want t' carry notes an' help you 'long with her," continued Napoleon seriously.

"I did not know we needed any help, but I would not be at all surprised if we did."

"Ain't you got a note t' send her now?" asked Napoleon. "It'll only cost you a nickel."

The "beau" hesitated and then said, "Perhaps it would be a good plan to employ you, for I was just thinking I would like to send her a note," and he good-naturedly scratched off a note of introduction for his new employe.

"Please save all your jobs for me. I'll be 'round of'en. Thankee, sir," said Napoleon with dignity as he took the money and started forth.

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Good fortune favored him, for he found the girl at home. "I brung you a note from yer beau an' he looked eggzactly like he wanted an answer," began Napoleon enticingly. "It'll only cost yer a nickel an' I'll try t' get it there clean. Here's my card. I b'long t' th' 'Beau Runter Agency.'"

"I am sure this is a bargain," answered the delighted young woman, her face suffused with smiles as she read the note. In reply she wrote, "The little stick of sugarcane awaits without my door for the answer for which he assures me you are yearning. Isn't this too comical?"

"Have you been in business long?" asked the girl as she handed the lad the note and a five-cent piece.

"Just to-day," he answered, "an' I'm only goin' t' work for you an' yer beau an' I'll see yer ev'ry day 'cause I want t' make money.

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I have t' help my ole mammy an' I want some new pants an' so I must work hard. Must hike now an' get this down t' yer beau," he concluded in haste.

Not alone Napoleon, but all the "Beau Runters" met with flattering success that first afternoon. The novelty of the enterprise appealed to its victims, and notes flew back and forth.

"Seems t' me like all th' beaux were just a-waitin' for us t' carry notes," said Jack enthusiastically to his co-workers late the next afternoon. "Oh, it's a great bus'ness." He then carefully instructed Napoleon as to the corner at which he might hope to waylay his employers that evening about dusk.

So intensely absorbed was Napoleon in his commission that he stood patiently at his post for fully half an hour. At last he saw them—his "beau an' girl"—coming slow-

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ly down the street in the summer twilight. He looked at them anxiously, for they represented his working capital, and in them lay his hope of patchless pants. They were talking and laughing brightly as they neared him. "It's so comical and I enjoy encouraging the kids," the girl was saying as they approached.

Then Napoleon stepped forth. "Got any work fer me t' do this evenin'?"

"Why, bless me, here is my employe. Where did you come from?" asked the beau, and the boy felt relieved to have him speak thus pleasantly.

"Been a-waitin' fer you all th' evenin' an' I guess I'll walk home with you," replied Napoleon, remembering the advice of Piggy.

"I must say I like your industry, little chap, but I do not want to work you too hard. Do all the 'Beau Runters' work as hard as you?"

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"Yeppy, they're all out a-workin' to-night an' I guess we're goin' t' sit ev'ry night with th' beaux an' their girls. It's our bus'ness an' th' chief says we've got to 'tend strictly t' bus'ness, so come on an' let's go home."

The ruddy cheeked employer's eyes twinkled, but there was also an air of annoyance as he said: "Suppose you permit us this evening to proceed alone."

"I'll give you a bargain an' not charge much for this evenin' 'thout me," answered the boy.

"We hate to part with you, of course, but here is a dime for you. You need not bother to hunt us up every night."

"But I want t' work hard t' earn my livin', so I'll see yer to-morrow. Good-night!"

As enthusiastic and loyal "Beau Runters" the twins had experienced serious difficulty at times in eluding the watchful eyes of Aunt

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Sallie, and sometimes there would be whole days when it was impossible to attend to their work as closely as might be desired. However, they were able to earn enough to keep their interest stimulated.

The seriousness with which the "Beau Runters" transacted business was one of its most attractive features to their clients. The "Agency" flourished for ten days and the ambitions of its members grew proportionately. At a special meeting of the children called on the eleventh morning, Jack asked for any suggestions whereby their field of usefulness might be extended, so to speak.

"I've been a-thinkin' o' somethin'," promptly answered Prudence, who had experienced more trouble even than usual the past two days in separating herself from Aunt Sallie, "that p'rhaps we might get beaux for th' girls who don't have any. You

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see if auntie only had a beau then she wouldn't have so much time t' watch us an' we could get away easier."

"Yes, an' then we could do a lot o' work at home like Piggy does," added Patience.

"Did she ever have a beau, so we'd know what kind she likes?" asked Jack.

"No, I never saw any," answered Prudence. "I thought first I'd give her a card an' ask t' work for her an' her 'beau', but she hasn't any so I couldn't. She's so good I'm 'fraid she might not want t' try t' get a beau for herself, so I think we'd better s'rprise her."

"I think we'd better get her six beaux while we're doin' it, then we can each have one t' work for," suggested Napoleon, who yearned for more worlds to conquer.

"I'm a-thinkin' she might not like one we pick out," said Donald.

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"Oh, yes, she will, for auntie's such a grateful lady she'll 'preciate our work," replied Patience.

"If we have good luck gettin' Aunt Sallie beaux then we might hunt up a lot o' girls who haven't any an' get 'em all beaux. It won't s'rprise me if we get so busy we can't go t' school," concluded Jack.

"Hooray! That'd suit me 'cause I hate school," said Piggy.

"It's a worthy work an' we seem t' make lots o' folks glad. Ev'rybody laughs an' laughs while we're workin' for 'em," Prudence remarked.

"I guess they do. My beau an' his girl are allers a-laughin' when I come up—an' they're rich, too," chimed in Napoleon.

"I told yer beaux were rich as gold mines, an' I know," interrupted Piggy with great superiority.

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"Who'd we better get for auntie?" asked Patience.

"Course they ought t' be beaux without any wives or girls."

"An' we better not get 'em all in th' same bus'ness so she can choose," added Donald.

"I'm a-thinkin' th' preacher isn't married an' I should think she'd love t' have th' preacher," said Patience.

"My editor isn't married an' I never saw th' undertaker with a girl," said Jack.

"Only dead one, p'rhaps," somberly suggested Donald.

"An' if he had a reg'lar girl of his own course he'd want t' take her ridin' some days sure," asserted Napoleon.

"I don't think auntie'd like t' ride on th' hearse," asserted Patience.

"I do, an' I think it'd be perfec'ly stylish an' she could be a help at th' fun'rals. She'd

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prob'ly have t' go somewhere ev'ry day, too, an' that'd be a help, 'cause while she's gone we'll do our other work," was the enthusiastic rejoinder of Prudence.

"I guess she'd better have the undertaker then," remarked Jack, "'cause if he was her beau most likely he'd keep her busy."

"I choose her t' have a baker," said Piggy, smacking his lips in anticipation of the possibilities.

"An' I a banker with lots o' money," demanded Donald.

"An' you'd better choose a groceryman, Napoleon, 'cause he'd most likely give you somethin' t' eat ev'ry time you went t' see him," said Jack. "I'll take th' editor, Prue th' undertaker an' Pat can have th' preacher."

"Wish you an' th' squaws'd try t' get all these while th' rest of us kids are doin' th' other work; couldn't you?" asked Piggy.

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"Auntie said we could play over here all th' mornin' an' so p'rhaps we'd better go an' 'tend t' it 'cause mebbe we can't come over this afternoon," said one of the squaws.

"All right then, come on," replied Jack, and the trio started forth. "We'll take turns doin' th' talkin' an' let's start at th' undertaker's. You must talk there, Prue."

Prudence and Jack, at least, walked with considerable assurance into the undertaker's parlors where they found Aunt Sallie's prospective "beau" reading the morning paper, from which he raised his eyes and nodded quite pleasantly for a man with so melancholy a calling.

"Mr. Undertaker," began the spokesman bravely, "we're helpers t' beaux. Have you a girl?"

"What!" he cried. "A girl? No, I never have time for such foolishness."

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Jack rather resented the words. "I should think there were a lot of things worse you might do than have a girl," he said with some spirit.

"You see, it's just this way," continued Prudence; "we're in bus'ness, helpin' beaux an' girls 'long an' we've decided to get some beaux for th' girls who haven't any. Our auntie hasn't any so we're goin' t' get her some. She'd make a good girl for you."

The undertaker plainly hesitated.

"She's so cheerful," continued the child; "we thought she could ride with you on th' hearse an' p'rhaps sing at th' fun'rals. If you think you'd like t' have her for your girl we'll fix it all up for you for one dollar, an' you may come t' call on her to-night, an' we'll help you right 'long t' get 'quainted."

"Well, did I ever!" ejaculated the undertaker.

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"If you're not engaged for a fun'ral to-night you might like t' come up an' invite her t' go ridin'," suggested Jack, who was anxious to close the deal.

"You'd better pay for her now," said Patience.

The undertaker's head was hidden for a minute and when he raised it his face was quite red. "I don't have any too much fun in my life," he said, "and this is worth a dollar." Putting his hand in his pocket he drew forth a dollar and handed it to Prudence.

"Aunt Sallie's worth more'n a dollar, an' you'll prob'bly think so when you've seen her," said Jack loyally.

"Most likely," the undertaker responded as the trio started away.

Jack was the spokesman at the editor's, with whom he seemed on very friendly terms. From force of habit the editor began to

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smile when his eyes fell on the youngster in whom he delighted. Jack explained their errand, displayed the business card and concluded: "Of course you know very well that Miss Sallie's worth more'n a dollar an' she's a great bargain at that."

"Miss Sallie would be a bargain at any price," gallantly replied the editor. "Have you told her this new plan for her benefit?"

"Oh, no," answered Prudence, "we've found it much better t' s'rprise her in 'most ev'rything we do."

"I am not surprised at that," laughed the editor.

"Yes, an' we'd like t' have you call an' see her to-morrow night. She has an engagement with th' undertaker for to-night. She's very pretty," concluded the child.

"If you don't care we'd like t' collect in advance. We know she'll suit you, but if

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she shouldn't, we'll give you your money back," said Jack.

"The idea alone is worth a dollar to me," responded the editor smiling, as his hand sought his pocket.

The young minister who was next interviewed yearned to grow nearer the hearts of the children and greeted his callers pleasantly.

"I'm Patience Trevellyn an' we're now in th' beau bus'ness. Have you a girl?" The speaker went straight to the question at issue.

"I can't say that I have," replied the minister, blushing guiltily.

"We'd like t' sell you our Aunt Sallie for a dollar. She's most worthy an' prays just beautiful. Wouldn't you like t' have such a girl for your very own? She has no beaux, an' if you've no girl then don't you see you could both get fixed at once?"

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"What!" the minister gasped in astonishment. "Does your father and your aunt know where you are this morning?"

"Oh, yes, we're over t' Jack's playin' Sunday school. It's our fav'rite game," glibly answered the child.

"Were these three children a fair type of those in his parish over whom his heart had been yearning so tenderly?" he asked himself.

"We're thinkin' o' bein' missionaries when we grow up an' we have some poor folks now we want t' help," declared Prudence with sudden inspiration. "So your dollar 'll be put t' a worthy use an' you'll like that, won't you? Can't you come over t' see auntie night after to-morrow night? She's engaged for to-night and to-morrow night. It's t' th' undertaker an' th' editor, you know," concluded the child.

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The minister's sense of humor clamored to be heard. "It does seem as though she needs a minister under the circumstances," he mused aloud. Thereupon he took out his purse and handed Jack a dollar.

"We're sure you an' Aunt Sallie 'll be pleased with each other, an' we know she can help you out at prayer meetin'," declared Patience, as they said good-bye.

"Jack, I feel exactly like missionaries doin' this worthy work," said Prudence earnestly as they walked towards the bank. "Father says we ought t' think more 'bout givin' happiness t' ev'ryone 'bout us. Just think when we get through this mornin' we'll have six beaux for auntie an' that's most likely more beaux than any other girl ever got in one day!"

"Yes, I think she'll be pleased an' we're not only doin' somethin' for auntie, but

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we're helpin' all o' us t' earn some money. Here we are at th' bank."

The children entered the bank with as much unconcern as though selling Aunt Sallie was no unusual affair. They approached one of the windows and Jack said with his best air of politeness: "May we speak t' th' biggest man in th' bank who hasn't a wife nor a girl?"

"What did you say?" asked the teller in astonishment.

The question was repeated and the man replied: "I believe the vice-president would about fill the bill and here he comes now. Go and tell him what you want."

The children unhesitatingly approached Aunt Sallie's prospective adorer, looking into his face with the frank eyes of childhood. Since he was a stranger, the task was a little more difficult than usual.

"I'm Jack Carroll," began the chief of the



“ May we speak to the biggest man in the bank who
hasn't a wife nor a girl? ”

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Go-Hawks, "an' these girls are Patience and Prudence Trevellyn, an' we're lookin' for beaux for their Aunt Sallie, an' if you haven't a girl we'll let you be her beau for a dollar, an' Donald 'll run your errands an' work for you both an' kind o' help things 'long."

"And who may Donald be, pray?"

"He is Donald Brown. You see, we've formed an agency t' help beaux 'long," volunteered one of the girls for the enlightenment of her prospective uncle.

The future admirer of Miss Sallie asked the same foolish question they all did,—“Does your aunt know you are working in her cause?”

“Oh, no, we haven't told her, for we haven't had time t' tell her yet, but she'll prob'bly be pleased,” replied Patience soothingly.

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"We thought we'd charge you a dollar for auntie, an' we'd like you t' come t' see her two nights after to-night. I'd ask you t' come t' see her before, but she's very busy an' has engagements with th' undertaker, th' editor, an' th' minister. She's so perfec'ly stylish that she'll look very nice sittin' in your bank window when th' circus parade goes by," concluded Prudence.

To the children's amazement the man burst into laughter. "You are right in selecting a banker for it does seem as though one would be needed. Is Aunt Sallie young or old, may I ask?"

"She's older than we are. Kind o' oldish, mebbe," thoughtfully answered Prudence.

"She's a sure bargain, sir, for her cheeks are like roses an' she's never cross," added Jack.

"I am not the man to resist such a treasure. Here is your dollar, and please tell the fair

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lady that this is one of the happiest days of my life. If you have any more such bargains to offer while in business do not fail to look me up." The children heard him laughing as they left the bank.

"It seems t' me like ev'ryone is so pleased over gettin' auntie," commented Prudence, who had no reason to change her opinion even after the baker and the grocery-man had been interviewed.

When the children returned home at noon their faces wore such blissful expressions of contentment that Aunt Sallie's heart was filled with premonition of coming disaster. The twin's eyes seemed fastened on her. However, she asked no questions. As for the "Beau Runters," little did they dream that very night the agency was doomed to die.

Professor Trevellyn returned home a half hour earlier than usual that evening and

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called his sister to the study. "Sallie," he began soberly, all the while with a merry twinkle in his eyes, "I am sorry that we are about to lose you."

"Lose me? What do you mean, Philip?"

"I had occasion to stop at the club on my way home, and my friend, the editor of the "Enquirer," told me that he had enjoyed the most unique experience of his life this morning with my daughters and young Carroll, who had interviewed him on the possibilities of his becoming your "beau." He said that he had purchased the rights to call on you and look you over to-morrow evening for one dollar."

"Philip!" cried Miss Sallie aghast.

"Yes, it is true; but, my dear, you must expect such things when you have such precocious children for nieces. I am not positive as to the number of beaux you will

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soon have, for the new vice-president of the First National Bank came in while we were talking and asked if I objected to his becoming an admirer of yours; said that he had paid a dollar for the privilege and was assured that he was getting a bargain at that."

Miss Sallie left her brother without another word and went to search for the twins whom she found on the lawn. She spoke to them more sternly than ever before. "Children, tell me this minute where you went this morning and what you did? If you don't tell me everything I will punish you severely."

"We were with Jack doin' some worthy work, an' auntie, dear, we have a beautiful s'rprise for you that begins to-night an'—"

Miss Sallie groaned aloud at this confirmation of her worst fears. "Tell me at once what you children have done."

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“Don’t hold my hand so tight an’ I’ll tell,” began Prudence. “We’ve been helpin’ beaux an’ their girls ’long for two weeks, an’ we thought this mornin’ that you’d like t’ have some beaux ’cause you haven’t any an’ they’re nice t’ have. Wouldn’t you, auntie darling?” she concluded.

“Go on—” was the only response.

“Then we thought up all th’ people who hadn’t any girls an’ we’ve got you six beaux—an’ they each gave us a dollar for you—an’ they were so pleased that they laughed ’most all th’ time, an’ th’ undertaker’s comin’ to-night—if he don’t have a fun’ral—an’ Jack thinks mebbe he’ll bring his hearse an’ take you ridin’, an’ we’re all goin’ t’ earn our livin’s off you an’ your beaux an’—an’—why, dear a-u-n-t-i-e, you’re cryin’. Don’t you like gettin’ some beaux? The minister was just sweet ’bout it an’ I told him you could pray

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so lovely—an'—an' are you cryin' just 'cause you're so glad—auntie?"

The children had never seen Aunt Sallie weep. When she turned from them with her face flushed and her eyes full of angry tears they were appalled.

"What do you ever s'pose is th' matter with auntie?" queried Patience.

"It seems t' me there isn't anything t' cry 'bout, an' we each have a whole dollar," replied Prudence wonderingly.

* * * * *

A half hour later two little girls with red and swollen eyes, representing one-third of the working force in the "Beau Runter" agency, came slowly forth from their father's study, where they had tarried this long by request.



CHAPTER XV.

THE GO-HAWKS AS MISSIONARIES.

THE illustrious tribe of Go-Hawks and members of the agency of "Bow Runters" had trudged their weary way back and forth to school for four long weeks since the eventful day, when six times over they sold the privilege of being Aunt Sallie's beau. So sincere had been the efforts in her behalf that the disastrous ending was now spoken of in whispers.

Miss Sallie had watched the twins closely, fearful when they were out of her sight lest

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they should be in some new piece of mischief, and the only really happy moments she knew were those of school hours. Even a month of peace among the Go-Hawks did not entirely allay her fears. Shocked and grieved as she had been, she found it impossible to remain angry with the girls and Jack. Like the majority of children they were lovable even during the somewhat too frequent periods of mischievous activity.

Of all the Go-Hawks these three apparently required most often an outlet for their restless energy; following closely in their wake were Piggy and Donald with faithful Napoleon close behind. The latter perhaps felt that something might separate him from close intimacy with his beloved leader, Jack. All unconsciously he clung to the tender years that knew not the difference of race and class distinction. Even as Jack was born to lead,

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so was he to protect, and he had championed the weaker lad ever since they were in kindergarten at the age of five. He was responsible for so many of Napoleon's good times that the latter felt a devotion which was sometimes almost more than his heart could support.

It was natural when Napoleon failed to make his appearance at school for two days, that Jack should feel it necessary to return home the second afternoon by way of the outskirts of the town where the boy lived. He whistled shrilly in the yard rather than approach the door, and was much pleased when his signal was answered in person by Napoleon.

"What's th' matter, kid,—why haven't you been t' school?" he asked; "are you sick?"

"Nope, but mammy's got th' rheumatiz in

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her legs an' can't walk, an' so I got ter stay home an' take keer o' th' other kids."

"Are you doin' th' cookin' an' everything?"

"Yep, but 'taint hard, 'cause we ain't got nothin' much t' cook," said the boy candidly.

"Don't know what we'll do when we use up all th' money out o' th' blue chiny pot."

"When does th' doctor say she'll be well?"

"Ain't had no doctor, costs too much. Baby's kind o' sick, too."

"I wish you'd a father t' help," said Jack.

"I don't mind much 'bout that 'cause I never liked th' one I did have. He never done nothin' 'cept lick us an' my ole mammy done all th' work. There's th' baby cryin' now 'n' I bet Abraham Lincoln's done gone an' dropped it." Napoleon turned to enter the house. "Don't know when I kin come t' school—you come down agin."

Jack walked away in thought, for he was

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accustomed to shouldering Napoleon's burdens. When he reached home the first question he asked his mother was "When a person has th' rheumatism how long does it last?"

"Sometimes a good many months, dear," was the reply; "why do you ask?"

"Oh, Napoleon's mother has it an' you know she goes out t' wash ev'ry day. His father's dead you know. Napoleon has t' stay home from school an' take care of her an' the children an' cook too," he explained.

"That is a great deal for one little boy to do."

"He said th' cookin' wasn't so bad 'cause they didn't have much t' cook," answered Jack. "I wish we could help 'em some. He belongs t' our tribe, you know. Say, mother, what was that paper that a man brought here last night an' you an' father each wrote down

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what you'd do—a description, wasn't it?"

"Oh, you mean a subscription list and we wrote opposite our names so much, pledging to give that amount."

"If I get up one, will you care? For Napoleon's mother?"

"I love to have you wish to help those less fortunate than yourself, Jack, and if you will only be careful to whom you take the list," replied Mrs. Carroll slowly.

"I thought I'd take it t' all the Go-Hawks, t' you an' father an' mebbe one or two other friends."

The boy had been responsible for so much mischief in the neighborhood that the mother felt she would love to see him instrumental in lending assistance to the family she knew to be in real need.

"I can haul the things over there myself in my express wagon an' th' squaws can help,"

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continued the lad, beginning as usual to plan everything. Accepting his mother's silence for consent he went to her desk, and taking a sheet of paper wrote in his round, boyish hand: "Napoleon's mother is in soar need. She has rumatism and cant wash. All of us who sign here below will send her what we promise." The lad pondered deeply as he signed his own name writing after it "My old blue suit of clothes for Napoleon."

He handed the paper to his mother who read it and added her name for twelve loaves of bread each week. Jack's father wrote opposite his name a load of coal, while Mary, long suffering Mary, was induced to promise a jar of cookies. The paper was circulated among the Go-Hawks the following day, and to a man they scrawled their names for a donation. It must be confessed that while many of the things they gave away they did

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not care to preserve, the spirit was commendable.

The twins gleefully promised to contribute their "bare-back" dresses, which Aunt Sallie persisted in hanging in plain sight in the closet, to remind them how very naughty it was to spoil good dresses. After a hurried consultation they also wrote after their names "medicine," determining that the castor-oil bottle and a few others, against which they cherished a special grudge, should be sacrificed to the "worthy cause." In addition to all this generosity they offered to take the paper around after school and ask some older people to sign it.

It seemed to Jack a good plan, so after being dismissed they made the rounds that they had planned during recess. They followed their invariable rule of not consulting any one concerning the wisdom of their

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policy until they had secured good results.

"Doctor, we want you t' sign your name to this paper for some visits t' Napoleon's mother t' make her well, so she can wash," concluded Jack after he had carefully explained to a prominent physician the reason for their visit.

"Why didn't you call the City Physician?"

"'Cause we wanted the best in town an' so we came t' you," answered Jack promptly.

The physician's eyes twinkled at the readiness of the compliment, and after signing his name he wrote, "medical assistance towards recovery."

"She'll get well now, sure," said Jack to the girls as they started down the street.

"Course I felt kind o' funny when auntie wouldn't take th' undertaker for a beau, but I think this is such a worthy cause that it's our duty t' go in an' ask him t' promise a

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coffin if she should die," suggested Prudence.

"What do you want to-day? Have you any more aunts to sell?" asked the undertaker as the children entered his parlor.

"Auntie wouldn't want us t' talk any more 'bout that," answered Prudence and then explained her errand, adding, "an' we thought it'd be nice t' have you write down a coffin, 'cause she may die. You'd just as soon wouldn't you, for it seems like you have more coffins than anythin' else, an' we ask people t' give us what they've got the most of."

"You are the queerest youngsters I ever did see," he replied. "I'd just like to know if your aunt knows where you are to-day."

"You always ask that, Mr. Undertaker," answered Patience with dignity. "She doesn't know where we are, but we're sure she'll like it, 'cause we're not askin' for anythin' for ourselves or our own family."

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"Of course you don't need to send th' coffin 'less she dies," added Prudence.

When the undertaker hesitated, Jack said: "You know it need not be a fine coffin. A plain one 'll do. We've such a good doctor that I don't think she'll die, but we b'lieve in bein' prepared for the worst always. You can sign your name right here," instructed the chief, whose faith in humanity was so great that he never doubted the result of a request.

The undertaker wrote under his name "pine coffin," smiling whimsically meanwhile and muttering to himself as the children walked away, "The beatenest kids I ever saw. Wonder what they'll come for next?"

The children asked without hesitation for what they wanted from each one they visited. In consequence the paper was full and their hearts were light as they started home to

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interview Aunt Sallie. When they explained to her what they had been doing she took the paper nervously and read the list of names, dreading, she scarcely knew what.

She smiled as she saw that many of the names were those of men noted for their closeness. Probably under no other circumstances would they have subscribed a penny for the relief of the unfortunate colored family, but they could not resist the frank trustfulness of the children who never doubted their willingness to help. "And a little child shall lead them," whispered Aunt Sallie softly to herself as she signed her own name.

"Dears, I will do all that I can to help you," she said gently. "Poor little Napoleon always has a hard time and we will do all in our power that will enable him to return to school."

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"Auntie, don't you think this is a worthy cause?" asked Patience.

"Yes, indeed, and to have all this good come from the efforts of you children makes me very happy, so happy that I could almost forget some things that auntie wishes you had never done," she answered.

"Let's don't talk 'bout th' past, Miss Sallie," said Jack. "We'll make you proud of us to-morrow an' we're goin' t' go after all th' things with my old wagon, so I guess they won't go t' bed hungry any more."

"Th' doctor said he'd go up to-day, an' we left our castor-oil bottle at the house for fear they might need it," said Patience a little fearful, and still, anxious that the change of habitation of the hated oil bottle be known. However, as the child spoke low Miss Sallie did not catch the last of her sentence and in consequence still smiled genially at the three.

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Full of their plans they could hardly be patient through school hours the next day. They exchanged many meaning glances over their books, and so great was their desire to be at work at the close of school that they ran every step of the way home.

Miss Sallie was careful to put into the wagon many substantial comforts. As she watched the little procession starting forth to gather donations, she smiled at the rear guard of the Go-Hawks, who walked a discreet and admiring distance behind.

"Let's play we're soldiers startin' off t' war. There's our army behind and this is our supply wagon," said Jack.

"An' we're red cross nurses," answered Prudence adopting the suggestion immediately. "We're goin' right on the field of battle where people 're dyin'."

"I'm takin' you to the hospital, young

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women, where our brave General lies dyin'. That's Napoleon's mother, you know," explained the chief.

"We'll make him well, 'cause we've had much experience. We've been in sev'ral wars where most ev'ry one died," replied the child.

"The Gen'ral is shot in her legs," said the chief. "Have you a medicine to cure that?"

"We've sent on ahead both castor oil and cough syrup an' if all is taken it'll cure shot legs," asserted Patience, who hoped thus to demolish both medicines with one blow.

Before other plans could be matured for the relief of the "Gen'ral," the army reached the scene of action. According to arrangements, the majority of Go-Hawks lined up across the street and only Jack and the twins were to enter the cabin. They were scarcely admitted to the cramped quarters, where lay

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the "Gen'ral" on her bed of pain, before Napoleon called excitedly: "Things has been a-comin' all day an' th' doctor's been here an' medicine an' coal an' heaps an' heaps t' eat—hooray! oh, bully! Hooray!"

"An' here's a lot more," answered Jack, running out to the wagon and bringing in an arm load.

"Say somethin' t' comfort th' Gen'ral, one of you nurses," whispered Jack to the twins, who seemed bashful and inclined to hang back. "You better pray or do somethin'."

The room seemed full of dusky faces with eyes fastened expectantly on the twins, while the rheumatic "Gen'ral" asked, "Did you chilluns do all this?"

"Yes'm, we did an' there's a lot more comin', if you have need," answered Prudence, approaching the bed and eager to follow

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Jack's instructions to say something comforting. "We asked th' undertaker t' give you a coffin if you died, so don't worry 'bout that 'cause if you do die we Go-Hawks 'll get up a grand fun'ral."

"What!" gasped the woman in superstitious terror at the words of the child which she feared might be a warning.

"An' I tell you if you do die," continued the child cheerfully, "don't worry 'bout your children, 'cause I promise you t' take 'em all home t' my aunt an' she'll be glad t' bring 'em up. She's bringin' me an' my sister up an' she'll most likely never have any children of her own, so prob'bly she'd be most delighted to get yours."

In reply the "General" groaned aloud, not at all as one would expect of a brave officer, who had no more serious ailment than being "shot in both legs."

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"She's perfec'ly stylish, my Aunt Sallie is, so your children 'll be brought up just grand," concluded Prudence as a parting bit of consolation.

The chief concluded it was time to go, for somehow the nurses did not seem able to give just the proper spirit of cheer that was needed. As the three joined their waiting comrades, Jack said earnestly: "Oh! This has been a grand day's work for the Go-Hawks. I guess Napoleon's folks won't be hungry for a month. I put all th' money in th' blue pitcher."

To these words Donald replied that if they ate everything they had they'd all get sick. The words passed unheeded by the others who discussed the events of the past few days as they walked home, and the spirit of sacrifice made tender each child's heart.

Aunt Sallie and the professor were watch-

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ing for the girls at the study window. The former had been telling her brother of the efforts the children had made to relieve the sufferings of the colored family. "Dear little souls! They really have accomplished a great deal of good the past few days, and yet they were so mischievous all summer that at times I despaired."

"Did you get everything there in safety, dears?" asked Aunt Sallie.

"Oh, yes, all 'cept th' big things an' th' coffin an' that won't be sent 'less she dies," answered Prudence. "An' oh, auntie, it was perfec'ly stylish t' be out doin' work just as big folks do," continued the child as they entered the dining room a few minutes later.

Not long afterwards when bed-time came and Prudence kissed her father good-night, she whispered, "I wish I could do somethin'

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for somebody ev'ry day, father, 'cause—
'cause it makes me feel good inside."

"Father wishes so too, dear," he answered in a low voice as he kissed her.

"And are you happy also, little one?" he asked Patience as she drew near.

"Oh, yes, father, I'd rather be a Go-Hawk 'n be a preacher an' I think if Napoleon's mother 'd take a whole bottle of castor oil it 'd cure her. I think the doctor ought t' tell her to, an' oh, father, it was grand t' play we were goin' t' war an' I'm goin' t' help people always, an' good-night! Good-night!" said the child as she kissed her father over and over again.

* * * * *

It seemed to the professor that he had been in bed but a few minutes and that the arms of the child were still tightly clasped about his neck as she rained kisses on his face

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and whispered "good-night," when he was suddenly awakened from a deep slumber. It was in reality only midnight.

The same peal of the doorbell roused his sister. She had been dreaming of Jack's friend, the editor, who never lost an opportunity to tell her that one dollar's worth of herself, for which he had paid cash, belonged to him. The bell not only clanged once, but many times, and both Miss Sallie and her brother hastened into the hall, the latter quickly descending the stairs.

Then Miss Sallie heard an excited voice that sounded strangely familiar saying, "It's me an' I've brung 'em all t' her an' she's goin' t' raise us."

"Brought what and to whom, Napoleon?" asked Professor Trevellyn, and then he noticed what seemed to his eyes to be an endless number of dark little faces.

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“Brung all our kids—’cause mammy says she’s goin’ t’ die an’—an’—” the tears were rolling down the dark, troubled face. “Where’s Aunt Sallie, she’s goin’ t’ take keer o’ all o’ us. Prue said she’d do it an’ she asked us all t’ come here an’ live if mammy died and mammy said she thought she was a-dyin’ an’ for me t’ come on an’ bring all the kids t’ Aunt Sallie. An’ here we are— an’ where’s Aunt Sallie, ’cause we’re very tired?”

Miss Sallie’s face was a study as she stood at the top of the landing and quietly beheld her new family of sleepy-eyed colored children, the youngest a baby in the arms of Napoleon, who leaned wearily against the wall.

“Just sit down here,” said the professor, “while I find my sister and tell her you have arrived.”

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Professor Trevellyn shook with laughter as he joined his sister. "I see your life work has been brought to your door," he began teasingly.

"Philip, if you love me, dress and go for a physician and take him to Napoleon's home. I will follow soon with the children. We will do what we can for them in their own home," she concluded with much dignity.

"Then you do not wish me to adopt them? Only six, you know, Sallie."

She ignored his jesting. "Philip, I wonder what the Go-Hawks will do next. Do you suppose this is the only family Prudence has ordered for me?"

Later, as Miss Sallie accompanied her small charges home through the deserted village street, she laughed softly to herself as she thought over the events of the past few months and pondered over the future. "I

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wonder if all twins are as active as our girls," she mused.

"Guess th' Go-Hawks are all in bed," ventured Napoleon, suddenly feeling a sense of importance due to the late hour.

"I am sure I hope so," responded Miss Sallie. "I like best to think of them in bed."

"I like 'em best on th' war-path," answered the boy. "I think we'll have a war next summer for th' chief said he heard there's goin' t' be a new tribe started an' we'll fight 'em if they try t' steal our trail in th' woods."

"Oh, is your trail in the woods?" asked Miss Sallie. "It has seemed to me that the trail of the Go-Hawks was everywhere one would rather not have it."

"I don't understand," slowly answered Napoleon, "but here we are at our house,"

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and he pushed open the door. "Why, mammy isn't dead for she's talkin'," he continued joyously, "so we won't have t' live with you yet."

Professor Trevellyn overheard these words to his sister as she entered the dingy room, and chuckled to himself.

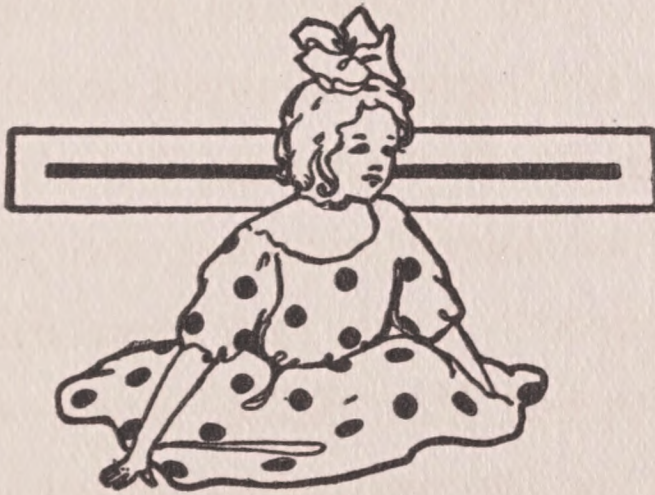
"I sure thought I was goin' t' die when I sent 'em t' you," explained the sick woman. "I s'pose it's 'cause I thought so much 'bout that coffin those younguns ordered for me. You are not angry with me, are you?"

"No indeed! I am very thankful you are better," replied Miss Sallie, as she did what she could for the woman's comfort.

"Having for nieces two squaws who are active members of a mighty tribe of Indians cause rather unusual complications for an aunt," she remarked to her brother as they returned home.

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"I am beginning to think so myself," he replied, as he bade her goodnight for the second time.



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